

ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE, IN INDIA



F. A. D'CRUZ, K.S.G.

SECOND EDITION.



RAMA VARMA RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
TRICHUR, COCHIN STATE.



SILVER BUST OF THE APOSTLE THOMAS AT ORTONA
IN ITALY.

ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE, IN INDIA.

**An Investigation based on the latest researches
in connection with the Time-honoured
Tradition regarding St. Thomas
in Southern India**

BY

F. A. D'CRUZ, K.S.G.,

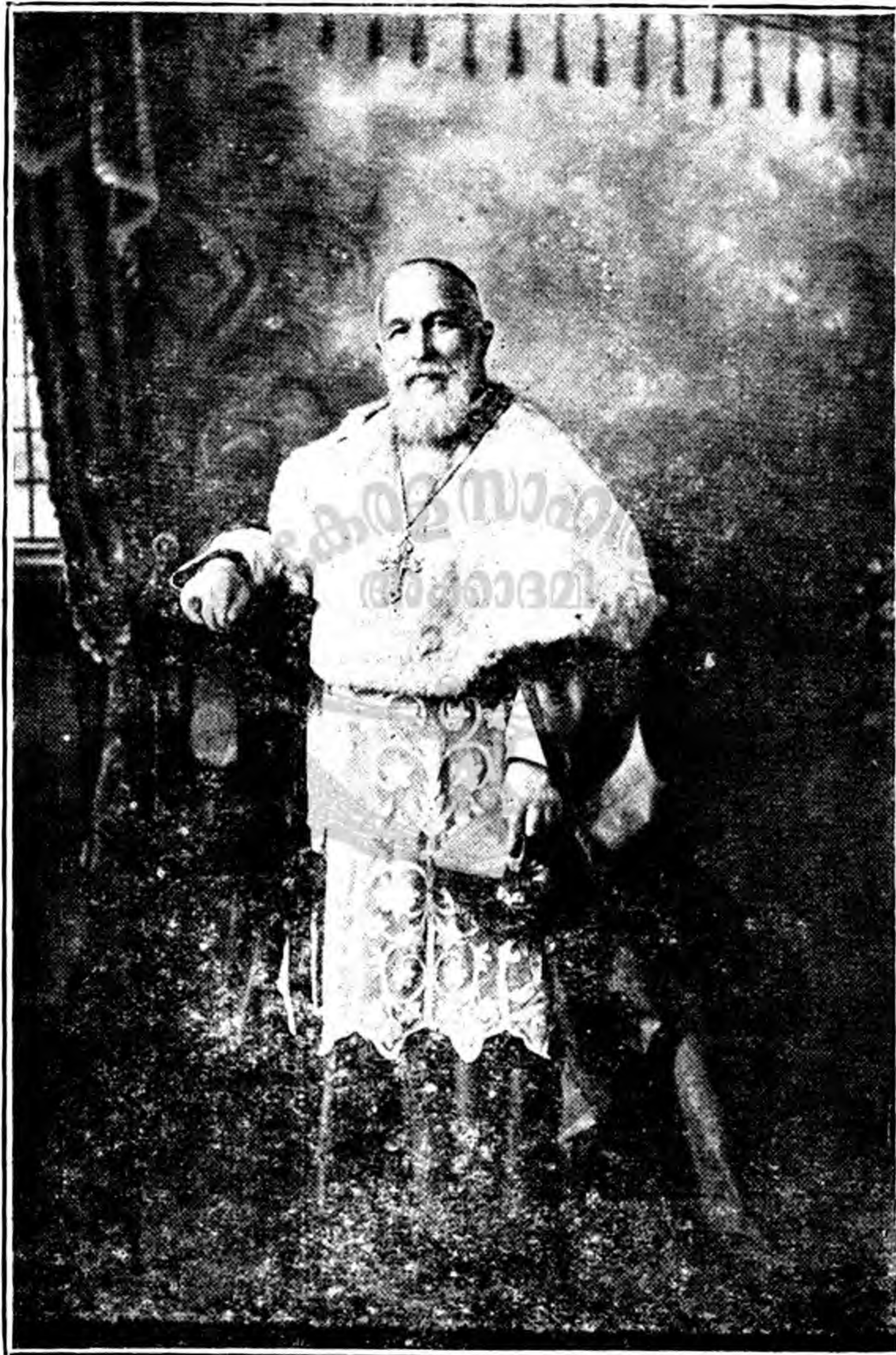
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Secretariat, Madras, and Editor, "The Catholic
Register," San Thomé, Mylapore.*

SECOND EDITION.

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THE RT. REV. DOM THEOTONIO MANUEL RIBEIRO VIEIRA
DE CASTRO, D.D., D.C.L., BISHOP OF SAN THOME, MYLAPORE.

To
HIS LORDSHIP
THE RIGHT REVEREND
DOM THEOTONIO MANUEL RIBEIRO VIEIRA
DE CASTRO, D.D., D.C.L.,
BISHOP OF SAN THOME, MYLAPORE,
in remembrance
OF HIS LONG AND BENEFICENT ADMINISTRATION OF THIS
HISTORIC AND VENERABLE DIOCESE OF THE
CITY OF ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE,
AND
in gratitude
FOR THE MANY KINDNESSES SHOWN TO THE AUTHOR
BY HIS LORDSHIP,
THIS HUMBLE VOLUME IS DEDICATED
BY ONE OF HIS DEVOTED
CHILDREN IN CHRIST.

*Feast of St. Thomas,
21st December 1928.*

F. A. D'CRUZ.

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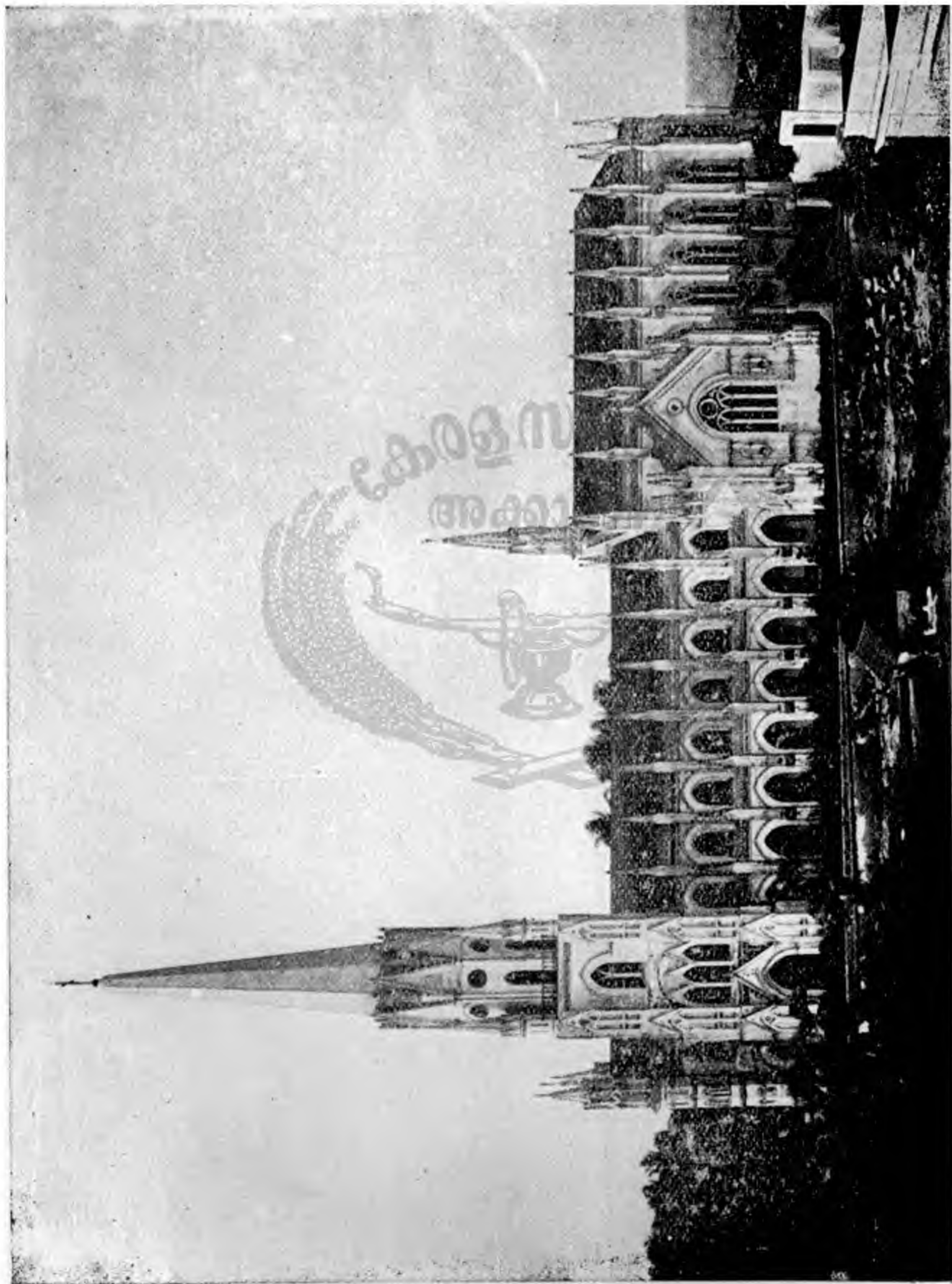
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Left bottom : (1) King Gondophares sends Habban to engage a builder. (2) Christ instructs Thomas to go to India. (3) Christ consigns Thomas to Habban. (4) Habban and Thomas embark for India. (5) Banquet feast, King and others present. (6) Thomas is struck on the cheek by the cup-bearer. (7) Cup-bearer killed by a lion. (8) Thomas at the King’s request blesses the bride. (9) Thomas before King Gondophares. (10) Thomas distributes the King’s money in alms. (11) Destruction of the idol (the devil in the form of a black monster). (12) The high priest kills Thomas.

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THE PRESENT CATHEDRAL AT SAN THOMÉ. CONSECRATED IN 1896.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In December 1921, on the Feast Day of St. Thomas, the Apostle, I had the pleasure to write a short Introduction to the first Edition of the book, “St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India,” by Mr. F. A. D’Cruz, K.S.G. To-day a similar opportunity arises in regard to the Second Edition of the same book and I must declare it gives me equal pleasure, if not greater. The Second Edition of the Author’s valuable book on the Apostolate of St. Thomas in India — and *Southern India* for all that — is a *revised* and *enlarged* edition, and it comes to us at seven years distance from the former. Two new chapters have actually been added, viz., “St. Thomas and Edessa” and “The Malabar Liturgy,” and much valuable matter to some of the old chapters.

Well, more research work in this connection has been done during this comparatively short period than I know of during any similar length of time previous to it. It is indeed remarkable that such a subject — dry as it is in itself — should have engaged the attention of so many writers of

late. What is more remarkable still is the fact that, but for a few minor stars in this galaxy of such writers, a decided leaning in favour of the Apostolate of St. Thomas in *Southern India* is noticeable and is continuously accentuated. “Thirty years ago the balance of the probability,” says Dr. Farquhar, “stood absolutely against the story of the Apostolate of Thomas in India. We suggest that to-day the balance of probability is distinctly on the side of historicity.”—*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 11, No. 1, January, 1927, p. 32 of *Reprint*.

Rawlinson's book — “*Intercourse between India and the Western World from the Earliest Times to the Fall of Rome*” published in 1926,— as well as Warmington's “*The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*” published in 1928, solve one of the biggest objections against the Apostolate of St. Thomas in India — usually framed in the following words :—“*How did St. Thomas get to India?*” Anybody reading these two volumes will discover to his great surprise that it was *mutatis mutandis* as easy to come to India then as it is now. Certainly it was more easy, more comfortable, and much quicker to come to India from the west following the Roman route—*via Alexandria, Suez, Red Sea, Arabian Sea*, than

it was by following that of Vasco-da-Gama round the Cape of Good Hope 1500 years later! And, if the Roman ships could have come to Southern India for pearls, pepper, ivory, and peacocks for the gentility of Rome, so could St. Thomas have “booked” his passage to India at one of the ports of call of Rome’s mighty ships.

The possibility either of an *overland route*, or a *watery way*, to India, or both, once established, it is less difficult to argue the historic fact of St. Thomas’ Apostolic labours in India — and *Southern India* to boot. The evidence gathered of late, and the arguments marshalled round the *central fact of the Malabar tradition* — whatever in it there be of a legendary character must of necessity cause the minor constellations of opposition to fade away to a point almost invisible. The task of building up the evidence in favour of St. Thomas’ sojourn in India — at a distance of two thousand years — is certainly more difficult than the job of destroying it by simply declaring without sufficient reason that the evidence does not satisfy the critics. They would tread safer ground if they tried to gainsay what there is of positive evidence by pointing out to similar traditions elsewhere. The builders, however, have been more logical all along the line than the destroyers. And, when you remember that

some of the would-be destroyers have blundered egregiously, regarding *present day facts* — in their eagerness to destroy — they should not be surprised if people begin to suspect their authority to speak impartially of the past — of the *hoary* past of two thousand years ago.

TRADITION AND LEGEND.

Be it as it may, tradition is one of the sources, or fountains, from which the historian drinks. His duty, however, is to sift the dross of legendary accretions from the gold of historic truth. The legends or accretions themselves could not have arisen out of nothing,—could not stand for a day had they not a *central historic fact* to lean upon,—which fact in this case is at once the *greatest* and the *least* that can be conceded. It is the *greatest*, or most important, because it points out to the main tree, or principal growth, round which the accretions thrived; and that is,—*the presence of the Apostle St. Thomas in India*. It is simultaneously the *least* that must be granted, as otherwise *the legends, or accretions, themselves would have no reason of existence*. There can be no shadows without a burning light to cast them.

Now the author of this book Mr. F. A. D'Cruz has rendered the said Tradition,

Malabar-Mylapore, a valuable and genuine service in continuing to separate the dross found in it from the gold of its historic truth. He has adroitly put together the arguments on which the main issue depends—availing himself very deftly of the discussions and discoveries that have been made during the last seven years, since his first book on the subject was published,—so that the layman may confidently read in a short treatise what others have written in pretty large volumes. He had, however as stated, to enlarge a little on his previous publication by adding two new chapters to his former book, and some valuable matter to some of the old ones.

It is gratifying to me also to mention the names here of those other writers who have written during the last seven years, or are still writing, on this subject—to us all in India of thrilling interest, viz., the Rev. Fr. A. Vath, S.J., the Very Rev. Fr. Hosten, S.J., Dr. P. J. Thomas, M.A., PH.D., B.LITT. (Oxon.), Professor of Economics, Madras University, Dr. Farquhar of Manchester University, — not to mention scores of others who have written favourably on the subject prior to these seven years under consideration.

CALAMINA AND MYLAPORE.

I should not like to close this Introduction without a word being said about the origin of the word *Calamina* in the Roman Breviary and its identification with *our present whereabouts*. If it could be historically proved that the Coast line near us was known in ancient times—at the time of St. Thomas—as *Kala-meen-(ur)* the country or Coast where the fish *Kala* is caught,—the identification of the word *Calamina* in the Roman Breviary with a place between the shore and St. Thomas' Mount would be an accomplished fact ;—and the Mylapore Tradition by itself would accordingly follow suit. It may well be that some ancient yet unearthed folklore may one day give us the key to the situation ; or, the discovery that the fact is known *traditionally* even now among a class of people whom no writer has yet got in touch with ; or, in some other way which we cannot at present surmise. The pretty story narrated at pages 105, 106 and 107 of Mr. D'Cruz's book increases our trust that efforts in that direction may be crowned with success.

Since writing the above lines I have been informed that a certain locality at the foot of St. Thomas' Mount is known as *Kala* street, and that that is the place where a certain class of

natives sell the fish which they bring over from the Coast. The fact seems to strengthen the conjecture that in those days the whole place might have been known as Kala-meen-(pakam), or in its Latinised form as *Calamina*.

A stone bearing a crude inscription in Portuguese dated 1596 was found a few months ago at St. Thomas' Mount. It commemorates the finding of a Cross there. The event was considered of sufficient importance to deserve an inscription. This may lead us to other welcome discoveries which may throw further light on pre-Portuguese times and the question of the apostolate of St. Thomas in India. The said inscription does not commemorate the finding of the well-known Cross of St. Thomas at the top of the hill. This is evident from the design of the Cross found made on the stone that commemorates its invention.

Mylapore itself, or *Maila-puram*, the Peacock city, was according to Tradition a very important town in ancient times both for its commerce and literature, and it must have attracted the attention of the Romans who could have come up to it very easily by sailing along the East Coast.

When Camocs — the Shakespeare of Portugal — visited Mylapore some four hundred years ago he thus described her ancient glory :—

*“Here rose the potent city, Meliapor
Named, in olden time rich, vast and grand ;*

.....

Camoes, *The Lusiads*, Cant. X.

Mylapore, however, cannot *by itself* be identified with Calamina, but there is nothing to forbid that near Mylapore there existed another place where the *Kala* fish was sold and exported—known as *Kala-meen-puram*. That must have been somewhere near the foot of St. Thomas’ Mount where the Apostle was done to death. Calamina, or the hill near it, being thus the place of his *martyrdom* according to the Roman Breviary ; and *Mylapore* the place of his *burial* according to the Malabar Tradition.

The hill itself and the city at its foot must have been known by some other name prior to the advent of St. Thomas. What was it?

Our present Mylapore, however, is either the same or an overgrowth of ancient Mylapore, and which it superseded as the case often is with cities ancient and cities modern. Ancient Mylapore — the Mylapore of St. Thomas — whether the one

that we see now, or another to the west of it, was farther away from the sea than it is now — the sea having encroached considerably on the land in these parts. That is what Camoes, again, seems to suggest in his immortal Ode :—

*In those days stood she far from shore,
When to declare glad tidings over the land
Thomé came preaching.....*

Ibid. Canto X.

Since Mylapore was then far from the sea it must have had its sea port and that on the Coast where the *Kala-meen* is known — at least by that name — on this part of the East Coast and quite close to Mylapore. *Supattanam*, or Fair port, is the name given by Dr. Farquhar as having been the sea port of the Peacock City or Mylapore. Probably the place had two names as the case often is, viz., *Calameen* (*ur* or *patnam*) and the more respectable name *Supattanam*. Says Dr. Farquhar : “The Christian community of the East (Coast) died out during the fifth century : if its tradition had survived, it would doubtless have been illuminating. No details have come down to us, except the brief narrative of his death.

“It is therefore all the more noticeable that his martyrdom is said to have happened at a point

in the vicinity of the most northern of the three ports of the Chola coast. These, beginning from the south, were *Kaviripattanam* (Kaviri port), at the mouth of the northernmost branch of the Kaviri delta, *Poduca* (Newhaven), probably identical with Pondicherry, and *Supattanam* (Fair port), close by what is now Madras. At Mylapore on the south side of Madras, stands a Roman Catholic Cathedral covering the place where, according to the tradition of South India and also of Edessa, his body was laid; and to the S.W. two low hills, respectively two and four miles distant, are associated in the tradition with his life and his death. Thus, according to the tradition of both Edessa and S. India, one of the centres of the Apostle's activity on the East Coast was quite near *Supattanam*."—*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 11, No. 1, January 1927, pp. 12, 13 of *Reprint*.

When finally the Portuguese more than 400 years ago discovered the tomb of St. Thomas in the eastern suburb of Mylapore, they gave the place the name of *San Thomé de Meliapor*, or San Thomé of Mylapore; called the hillock at the end of Marmalong bridge, and under the rock of which St. Thomas lay in hiding for some time, "Monte Pequeno," *Little Mount*, and

the hill farther on, “Monte Grande” or “Big Mount.”

Verily, the Mylapore of St. Thomas, being a Bramin town, was not a fit place for a fish market; and the fishermen must have gone farther inland to dispose of their fish,—and hence the names *Kala-meen-(ur)* meaning the Coast where the Kala fish is caught, and *Kala-meen-(puram)* the city where it is sold. Hence again *Calamina* of the Romans.

It was not unlikely either that Roman ships came up to the peacock city, or Mailapur, and consequently to Calaminur and Calamina. An extensive trade in pearls, pepper and peacocks was being carried on between India and Rome, and our present Fishery Coast and Coromandel Coasts must have been well known to the Roman triremes—though perhaps under different names. What wonder then if these very Roman ships were the means to convey to Rome the news that St. Thomas had been martyred at *Kala-meen-(ur)* or *Calamina*? Christian slaves there must have been among the crews that manned the Roman ships at that date! If the city of Madura—a pretty far inland city could have been visited by Roman traders, as Rawlinson says in his book above mentioned, page 166 (and it must have been from

the East Coast and not from the West) much more easy still was it for the same traders to come up the whole length of the Coast of Coromandel, and learn more about it than we can dream of. The Peacock city — The Holy Peacock city : Tirumaila-puram, or Mylapore, must have been quite an attraction to them and they would not have failed to visit it since they could easily do so.

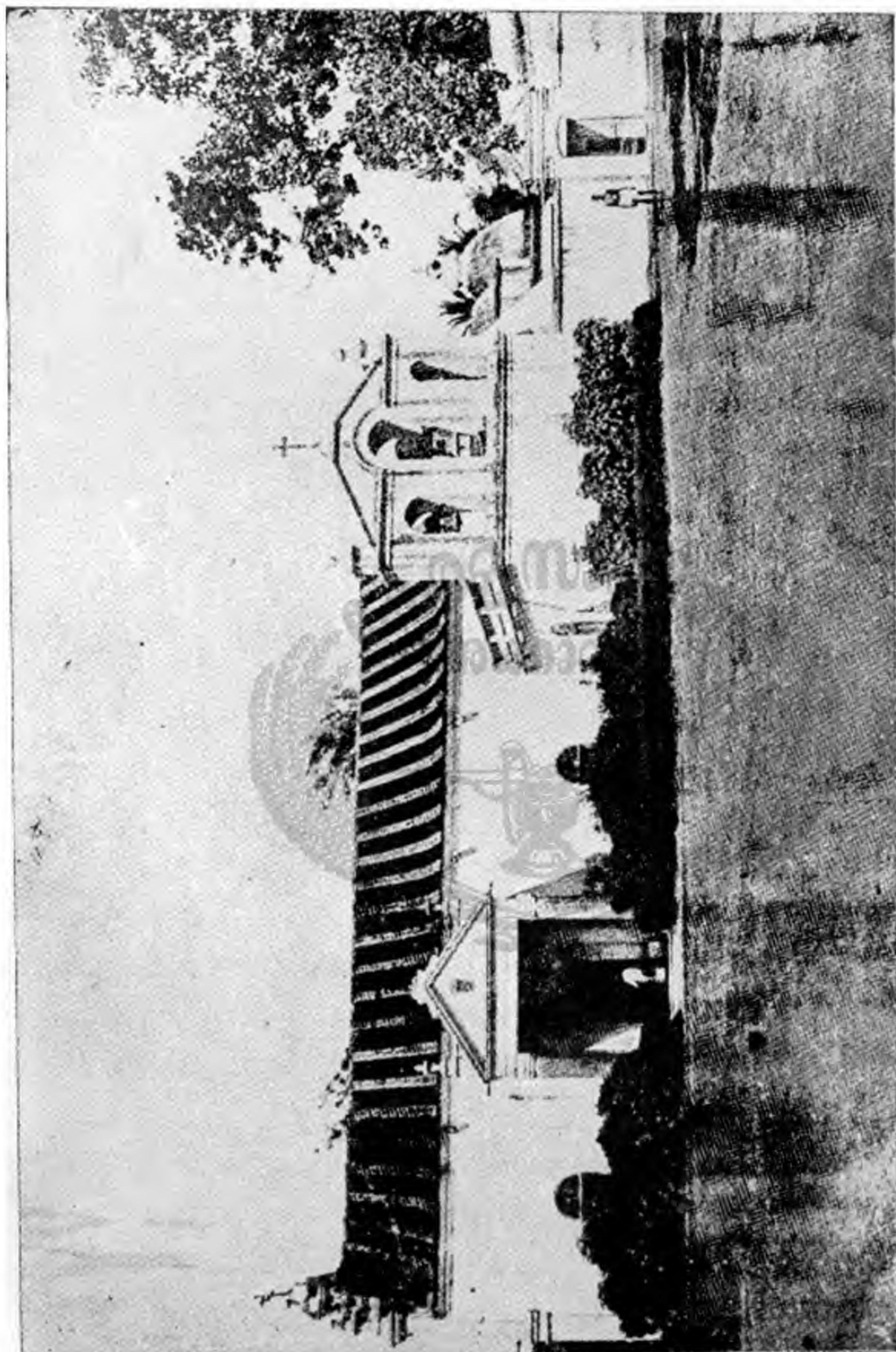
This would constitute an irrefragable argument in favour of the Malabar Tradition regarding Mylapore ; and its adverse critics would have to bend before the force of such evidence. Records too of the Roman Empire in regard to India, over and above those brought to light by Rawlinson and Warmington quoted above, and which perhaps lie shelved or buried and forgotten in some nook and corner of the world—may yet afford us the desired proof—apart from the Malabar Tradition—which by itself is proof enough of the Apostolate of St. Thomas in India. This latter evidence is not written, it is true, on hard stones, or sheets of parchment—but in the hearts and memories of men—assuredly as enduring a monument as those of granite and the like.

The Malabar and Mylapore Traditions go hand in hand. They either stand or fall together.

And, — if the Malabar Tradition is to-day the principal mainstay of the Mylapore Tradition the latter would also be an additional corroboration to the former,—should these lines be found ultimately to express historic truth regarding Roman trade with the Coromandel Coast as far North as the Peacock city or Mylapore.

I would accordingly strongly appeal for research work on these lines. It will be a glorious day when the shadows of doubt that still hang in many minds over these hoary traditions at Mylapore — to us all so dear — are dissipated once and for all time. In any case the way in which Mr. D'Cruz has dealt with the main issues connected with the tradition will, I have no doubt, appeal strongly to many of our critics.

A. M. TEIXEIRA.



THE OLD CATHEDRAL, SAN THOM . DEMOLISHED IN 1893.
TOMB OF ST. THOMAS THEN IN THE DOMED ORATORY AT THE BACK.
NOW IN TRANSEPT OF THE NEW CATHEDRAL.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The favourable reception accorded to the first edition of this work on its publication about seven years ago, will be seen from the appreciations of the Holy Father the Pope, Archbishops, Bishops and others, and the Press, printed at the end of this volume. It was especially gratifying to the author to find that the Holy Father, who had been for several years in charge of the Milan Library and of the Vatican Library for some time before his election as Pope, and is a research scholar himself, "much appreciated the noble intentions of the writer as well as the indisputable merits of his method of criticism." This, apart from the fact that the stock of the first edition has been exhausted, while demands for it continue to be received, has encouraged the author to issue a second edition of his work.

Since the first edition was published in 1922, other works on the subject, and important articles in some of the leading journals have appeared. Some of these we have added to the list of authorities that will be found after the last chapter in this volume.

Most of the writers are in favour of the time-honoured tradition connecting St. Thomas with Southern India and endeavour to throw more light on the evidence in support of it. A few are hostile critics. Among the latter Dr. A. Mingana, who is Assistant Keeper of Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and Curator of Manuscripts in the Rendal Harris Library, Birmingham, has interested us most, for he has given us much information on the early spread of Christianity in Central Asia and the far East ¹, and in India ², which is of service to us, despite his hostile criticisms. His expert knowledge of Syriac and Arabic is no guarantee that his judgments are sound, for he is distinctly biased against the St. Thomas tradition and dismisses it almost in a scoffing style.

Dr. Mingana is evidently much upset over an article by Dr. J. N. Farquhar which appeared in the January number of the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, 1926, entitled *The Apostle Thomas in North India*, in which the latter supports the tradition. In the course of his own article in the subsequent July number of the same journal on *The Early Spread of Christianity*

¹ In the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, July 1925.

² *Ibid.*, July 1926.

in India, Dr. Mingana admits that it is the constant tradition of the Eastern Church that the Apostle Thomas evangelised India, and that there is no historian, no poet, no breviary, no liturgy, and no writer of any kind, who, having the opportunity of speaking of Thomas, does not associate his name with India; that some writers mention also Parthia and Persia among the lands evangelized by him, but all of them are unanimous in the matter of India; that the name of Thomas can never be disassociated from that of India; that to refer to all the Syrian and Christian Arab authors who speak of India in connection with St. Thomas would therefore be equivalent to referring to all who have made mention of the name of Thomas; that Thomas and India are in this respect synonymous (pp. 15, 16 of reprint). And again earlier in the book (p. 4) he says: "It may, or it may not, be true that St. Thomas evangelised the Indians, although we should find it difficult to reverse with a single stroke the constant tradition of the Church to this effect, from the second century down to our days." And yet he starts his article with the following introductory remarks: "In the last number of the Bulletin (1926, pp. 80—111), Dr. Farquhar resuscitated from the grave of oblivion the question of St. Thomas' evangelisation of India. Almost

all the critics of the latter half of the nineteenth century had pronounced a negative verdict on the question of the historicity of the mission of Thomas, and relegated it to the swollen catalogue of apocryphal fiction, classed in the domain of what we generally call a myth."

What is the meaning of opening the ball, so to say, in this fashion, if it is not to poison the wells and prejudice the reader from the start against the very idea of entertaining the possibility of St. Thomas having ever evangelised India; and thus with one stroke of the pen to blow the tradition into space and consign it to oblivion as not even worthy of consideration, notwithstanding the persistence with which it has been held almost universally from the earliest centuries as is admitted by Dr. Mingana himself?

And then he refers to Dr. Medlycott's book on *India and the Apostle Thomas* published in 1905, in which, he says, he whole-heartedly vindicated the general historicity of the mission of St. Thomas to India without qualifications of any kind, and to a work published seven years later by Fr. J. Dahlmann, S.J., *Die Thomas-Legende*, who likewise strongly advocated this historicity. "These two books, however," he adds, "did not seem to have convinced many scholars, certainly

not those of the Tübingen school, and in 1914 Richard Garbe ¹, the Indologist, disposed of all the 174 pages of Dahlmann's dissertation, and the 300 pages of Medlycott's work, in a few short passages."

This, surely, is easily done ; but it is no recommendation, and need not stagger any one with the least power of discrimination, whose brow is not clouded with certain fixed predilections. Dr. Mingana appears to be greatly impressed by the scholars of the Tübingen school. As we know it is this school that is responsible for impugning the credibility of the traditional view of Christianity itself and of its Founder, and most of the critics of the latter half of the nineteenth century were imbued with the spirit of the Tübingen school ; and so we need not attach much weight to the hostile critics of that school. They were useful in their way ; for instance, when they began to attack Christianity and its accepted ideals and all its traditions in the middle of the nineteenth century, Christian apologists were taken aback and were unprepared to meet their novel objections. But these very attacks have forced Christian thinkers to devote their energies to deeper studies to meet the exigencies of the times, with the

¹ *Indian und das Christentum.*

result that we have had profound scholars in the Christian camp, who have compelled their hostile critics to, at least, considerably modify their original findings. For the same reason we have to thank hostile critics of the St. Thomas tradition for stimulating research in this connection, and for the several works that have in recent years appeared in support of it.

Thus these critics have by no means succeeded in consigning the tradition to the grave of oblivion, but have contributed to a large extent in keeping it very much alive at the present day. Dr. Farquhar rightly describes the position when he says: "Thirty years ago, the balance of probability stood absolutely against the story of the apostolate of St. Thomas in India. We suggest that to-day the balance of probability is distinctly on the side of its historicity."

This remark is made by Dr. Farquhar in the second article he published in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* of January 1927, entitled *The Apostle Thomas in South India*. In no way disconcerted by Dr. Mingana's scepticism, he follows his own course of reasoning and finds sufficient evidence to support the tradition. We need not, of course, accept the way in which Dr. Farquhar has linked the whole story together,

but we can be thankful for the new light he has thrown on certain parts of it.

Dr. Mingana evidently thinks that the absence of *contemporary* historical evidence is enough to consign the tradition to the domain of myths. He says (p. 5): "No early Indian has ever written the history of the Church of India, and all our information concerning even the mere existence of a Christian community side by side with Brahmanism and Buddhism in the immense country stretching south of modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan to the Indian Ocean is almost exclusively derived from Syriac and Greek authors." And again on page 8 he remarks: "Thomas may have gone to India and made some converts there, but these converts have never had an independent existence of their own as a Church. History is absolutely deaf and dumb on their subject." Indeed, what materials have we for the general history of Southern India itself? Is he not aware of the fact that, as Mr. Vincent Smith has pointed out ¹, we labour here under the same difficulties, and that from the lack of native annalists, the history of the ancient kingdoms of the south previous to the year 800 of the Christian era, has almost wholly perished? What wonder

¹ *The Early History of India*, pp. 7, 467.

then if, with the wars and persecutions of years, the earliest records of the existence of a Christian community in South India in the Apostolic age shared the same fate! The best authorities, however, maintain that a critical examination of records, whether local or not, dated later than the events they refer to, can extract from them testimony of a tradition which may be regarded with a high degree of probability as faithfully transmitted from earlier times, so as to make it unreasonable for a judicious mind to reject it in the absence of positive evidence to the contrary.

This being so, what is the value of his statement quoted above, that if St. Thomas had gone to India and made some converts, these converts have never had an independent existence of their own as a Church, in the face of the counter-statement that he himself quotes (p. 16) from *the Doctrine of the Apostles*, viz., “India and all its own countries and those bordering on it, even to the farthest sea, received the Apostles’ hand of priesthood from Judas Thomas, who was guide and ruler in the Church, which he built there, and ministered there”?

And then he dates this document A.D. 250, and thinks that the grounds of the writer’s assertion concerning an event that took place about 180

years previously may be questioned, even though we cannot deny that what he writes was known to him at least from hearsay. But as we have shown in the text within (p. 73), Dr. Cureton of the British Museum argues for placing it early in the second century, and Mr. Philipps and Dr. Flect are disposed to date it in the same century. This makes a difference and places the narrator a hundred years nearer the event, so that here we have a very explicit statement in the earliest historical record, whether based on hearsay or not, associating St. Thomas, the Apostle, with India, and stating that he "was guide and ruler in the Church which he built there and ministered there."

The same phraseology is used in the case of the other apostles mentioned in this document in regard to the countries evangelised by them, so that the word *built* must be taken in the sense of established, as in Matthew xvi, 18, where our Lord says to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my Church." The whole passage, therefore, clearly means, wherever it occurs, that the Apostles established ecclesiastical provinces, or dioceses as we call them now, in the lands they severally evangelized.

Despite the adverse criticisms of recent date we have not found it necessary to alter the main

conclusions arrived at in the first edition of this work. We have endeavoured, however, to bring out clearer certain parts of it on which more light has been thrown by the literature that has since grown around this perennial subject. Much new matter has also been added, which we believe strengthens considerably the old fortifications of the tradition, and will, besides, be found interesting. In keeping with our original purpose we have confined ourselves to an investigation of the earlier and more important evidences establishing St. Thomas' connection with India, and have dealt with the main features of the time-honoured tradition which has so well stood the test of ages. We have also preserved our method and style so as to make the work interesting to the general reader and at the same time appeal to the learned. We leave it to others to speculate on later evidences and other details connected with the tradition. There are some scholars who are already engaged on this wider research, notably the Rev. Fr. H. Hosten, S.J., of St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling. He has for several years past been devoting his time to much research, archæological, historical and bibliographical, and is at present editing and publishing Father Van den Abeele's translation of Fr. Vâth's book on *St. Thomas, the Apostle of India*, as *Supplements to the Catholic Register of San Thomé, Mylapore*, several numbers of which have already appeared.





STAINED GLASS OVER THE HIGH ALTAR IN THE CATHEDRAL AT SAN THOMÉ

ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE, IN INDIA.

PART I.

ST. THOMAS IN THE BIBLE AND TRADITION.

I. THE BIBLE RECORD.

No incident is recorded of St. Thomas, the Apostle, individually, in the synoptic Gospels. Only his name is mentioned with the others in the lists given by Matthew (x. 3), Mark (iii. 18) and Luke (vi. 15). In the Gospel of St. John, however, he appears in a characteristic light, and is revealed as a personality of singular charm and interest, full of devotion and ready to die with his Lord and Master. It was when Jesus was going to Judæa to raise Lazarus to life, where the Jews had lately sought to stone Him, and the rest of the disciples endeavoured to dissuade Him from making that journey, that "Thomas, who is called Didymus (twin)," said to them: "Let us also go that we may die with Him." (John, xi. 16). So great was his love for his Divine Master even before the descent of the Holy Ghost.

Again, when our Lord in his discourse at the Last Supper informed his disciples that He was

about to leave them, but told them for their comfort that He was going to prepare a place for them in His Father's House, and whither He was going they knew and the way they knew, St. Thomas, who ardently desired to follow Him, said : "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest ; and how can we know the way?" Christ at once quieted his misapprehension by replying : "I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh to the Father, but by me." (John, xiv. 2-6). It was at this discourse that our Lord promised to send them the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, who would abide with them for ever, and would teach them all things and bring to their mind all things whatsoever he had said to them. (John xiv. 16, 17, 26.)

After His resurrection, when our Lord appeared to His disciples, Thomas was not with them, and would not credit their statement that they had seen the Lord. "Except I see in His hands," he said, "the print of the nails and put my finger into His side, I will not believe." He evidently presumed that it was a mere phantom or apparition. After eight days when the disciples were again assembled and Thomas was with them, Jesus appeared and stood in their midst, although the doors were shut, and said : "Peace be to you." Then addressing Thomas, He said :

“Put in thy finger hither and see my hands. And bring hither thy hand and put it into my side ; and be not faithless but believing.” Thomas answered and said to Him : “My Lord and my God.” Jesus then said to him : “Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen and have believed.” (John, xx. 20-29). Notwithstanding this gentle rebuke of our Lord, the very circumstance of St. Thomas’s incredulity at first and subsequent confession of faith in the reality of the Resurrection and of the Divinity of Christ, is held by the Fathers of the Church as having done more to confirm us in our faith in those fundamental truths of Christianity than the belief of all the other Apostles.

Again, when our Lord appeared to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, Thomas is mentioned as having been present there with Simon Peter and some of the others. (John, xxi. 1, 2.)

And then Thomas must have been also present when our Lord appeared to the *eleven* as they were at table just before the Ascension, and upbraided them for their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen

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him after he was risen again ; and when he immediately after commissioned them to go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark xvi. 14, 15.)

After the Ascension of Christ into heaven when the Apostles returned to Jerusalem from Mount Olivet and went up into an upper room, where they abode, St. Thomas was among the eleven who are here each mentioned by name in the Acts, where, it is further stated, "All these were persevering with one mind in prayer with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." (Acts i. 12-14.)

Later on when the days of Pentecost were accomplished and the Apostles were all in one place, we are told, in the Acts just quoted (ii, 1-12), how parted tongues as it were of fire appeared and sat upon every one of them, and how they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with diverse tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak, and how men from every nation dwelling at Jerusalem at the time assembled in great numbers to hear the Apostles preach, and how they were all astonished and wondered at hearing them speak in their own tongues of the wonderful works of God. It is important here to

note that among the many nationalities mentioned, there were Parthians and Medes and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, with whose lands St. Thomas came subsequently to be connected in the course of his missionary labours in spreading the Gospel far and wide.

This is what we can gather from the Bible regarding Thomas, the Apostle. But another text has been brought forward incidentally by Dr. Burkitt in his *Early Eastern Christianity*, while discussing the proper name of St. Thomas, in Lecture vi, *The Acts of Judas Thomas*, in the belief that he is the Apostle there referred to. It is John xiv. 22.

Dr. Burkitt says : "We all know that Thomas means "twin," and the Syriac tradition had it that the name of the Apostle whom we call Thomas was Judas the Twin. Consequently the earliest Syriac text of the Gospels calls that Judas who was *not* Iscariot (John xiv. 22) by the same name as the hero of our tale, viz., Judas Thomas." But Dr. Burkitt does not seem to have observed that in verse 5 of the same chapter of the same Gospel the Apostle who interrupted our Lord in his discourse at the last supper by a question is called "Thomas," and that it is most unlikely that some verses after the same Apostle would be called by another name, viz., "Judas not the Iscariot."

If we turn to John xiv. 21-23, we read : “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. And he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father ; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” Then Judas said to him, not the Iscariot : “Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered and said to him : “If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him.” It is a striking passage and the question is characteristic of St. Thomas. This, and the Syriac tradition that the proper name of St. Thomas was *Judas*, if that can be maintained, would seem to have misled the Syriac translator of the Gospel.

Dr. Farquhar, in his article on “The Apostle Thomas in North India” in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester*, January 1926, p. 109, while maintaining that there is evidence in the earliest Syriac Christian texts that the Church of Edessa called the twin Apostle “Judas Thomas,” sees the incongruity in the Syriac translation of John xiv. 22, in the Sinai Palimpsest, the earliest Syriac version of that Gospel ; and endeavours to explain the variation between the Greek and Syriac texts

of that verse. He says : "The author of the Gospel certainly was not thinking of 'Thomas' at this particular point ; for he invariably refers to him as 'Thomas' (xiv. 5 ; xx. 26, 27, 28) or 'Thomas who is called Didimus' (xi. 16 ; xx. 24, xxi. 2), and to have called him 'Judas' in a single instance would have seriously confused his readers. But the translator of the Sinai text had been trained under the influence of Edessa, and had therefore known all his life that the twin's name was Judas ; and concluding that he was the Judas referred to in John xiv. 22 he took the simplest way of indicating the Apostle by calling him 'Thomas'."

In support of his statement that there is evidence in the earliest Syriac Christian texts that the Church of Edessa called the twin 'Apostle Judas Thomas,' and that the translator of the Sinai text had been trained under the influence of Edessa, which accounts for his rendering of the text in John xiv. 22, Dr. Farquhar quotes the Sinai Palimpsest, which is believed to come from about A.D. 140, and five other early authorities of subsequent dates. But he adds : "Nowhere else in early Christian circles is his personal name Judas known. Even the Syriac *Diatessaron* does not call him Judas, the reason being that it was

prepared at Rome.” He then asks : “What is the source of this exclusive and persistent tradition?” “A letter containing the double name,” he says, “written by the Apostle himself, and sent by him to the Church in Edessa, is the one natural and sufficient explanation.”

It may be that St. Thomas sent letters to Edessa from the different places he went to preaching the Gospel, as the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, which Dr. Cureton dates early in the second century, explicitly states that St. Thomas wrote letters from India, which were read in the Churches in every place. He must have signed his letters, and probably Edessa was familiar with his name. On the other hand the question arises whether the mistranslation of the text (John xiv, 22) by the author of the earliest Syriac version of the Gospel did not start the tradition regarding his name in Edessa, and mislead writers who came after him, since, as Dr. Farquhar acknowledges, nowhere else in early Christian circles is his personal name Judas known, and even the Syriac *Diatessaron* does not call him Judas ; and we may add, that even in the Latin Vulgate, St. Jerome, the translator, adheres to the version given in the Greek text, and commentators identify “Judas. not the Iscariot” in the verse in question with the

Apostle who is called *Thaddeus* by Matthew (x. 3) and by Mark (iii, 18), and *Judas Jacobi* in the Greek and Latin versions, or *Judas the brother of James*, or *Jude, the brother of James* in the English Protestant and Catholic versions respectively, by Luke (vi, 16), in the lists given by them of the twelve Apostles in the chapters quoted, where there is no variation in any of the names, except in this case. *Jacobi* is translated as "the brother of James," as St. Jude in the opening lines of his Epistle calls himself the brother of James. However, for our purpose it is immaterial whether St. Thomas' proper name was really Judas or not; but the text in question (John xiv, 22) cannot be taken as recording an incident connected personally with him.

II. ST. THOMAS AND EDESSA.¹

St. Thomas' first act after the descent of the Holy Ghost, was, as related by Eusebius in his *History of the Church*, to carry out a promise made by our Lord to King Abgar of Edessa to send one of his disciples to heal him of his diseases and give salvation to him and to all who were near to him. The passage is interesting and is reproduced by Dr. Cureton in his *Ancient Syriac Documents*, page 1. It is as follows :—

“When the divine nature of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ was published abroad among all men by reason of the wonderful mighty works which he wrought, and myriads, even from countries remote from the land of Judæa, who were afflicted with sicknesses and diseases of every kind, were coming to him in the hope of being healed, King Abgar also, who was renowned for his valour among the nations on the east side of the Euphrates, had his body afflicted with a severe disease, of such a kind as there is no cure for it among men : and when he heard and was informed of the name of Jesus, and about the

¹ Now called Urfa or Orfa, a city of Northern Mesopotamia on a tributary of the Euphrates.

mighty works that he did, which all men equally testified concerning Him, he sent to him a letter of request by the hand of a man of his own, and entreated him to come and heal him of his disease. Our Saviour, however, at the time that he called him, did not comply with his request : yet he deemed him worthy of a reply ; for he promised him that he would send one of his disciples, and would heal his diseases, and give salvation to him and to all who were near to him. Nor was the fulfilment of his promise to him long deferred : but after he was risen from the dead, and was taken up into heaven, Thomas the Apostle, one of the Twelve, as by the instigation of God, sent Thaddæus (so in Greek of Eusebius, but in Syriac, Addai, or Addæus as is found in original Syriac treatises), who also was numbered among the seventy disciples of Christ, to Edessa, to be a preacher and Evangelist of the teaching of Christ, and through him the promise of Christ was fulfilled.”

Eusebius then adds that “you have in written documents the evidence of these things, which is taken from the Book of Records which is at Edessa ; for at that time the kingdom was still standing.” Eusebius also reproduces the letter to our Lord and his reply to King Abgar

referred to in the foregoing extract, and which he says were taken by him from the Archives.

Some authorities are doubtful about this matter. Among the latest critics, Dr. Burkitt, in his *Early Eastern Christianity*, is inclined to discredit the whole tradition as given by Eusebius and to treat it as apocryphal, on the ground that in the *Doctrine* of Addai there is an anachronism so glaring that it must be more than a mistake. Addai is said to have consecrated Aggai, his disciple who succeeded him; but the latter, having been suddenly martyred at the instance of a rebellious son of King Abgar after the father's death, for refusing to make him a diadem of gold, such as he used to make for his father, Palut, who succeeded Aggai, was obliged, it is stated, to go to Antioch to be consecrated by Bishop Serapion there, who, it is further stated, was himself consecrated by Zephyrinus of Rome. Now, Serapion was Bishop of Antioch from 189 or 192 to 209, and Zephyrinus was Bishop of Rome from 202 to 218, and therefore, it is held, could not have consecrated Serapion. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* (vol. xv. "Zephyrinus, Saint, Pope") states that "after the death of Pope Victor in 198, Zephyrinus was elected his successor and consecrated," and gives the date of his death as 20th

December 217. The consecration of Bishop Serapion might have been delayed for some years after he succeeded to the See of Antioch, which will explain the apparent anachronism. However, as the consecration of the third bishop of Edessa appears from these dates to have occurred so late as about A.D. 200, the inference is drawn that Christianity in Edessa started among the Jews and was first preached there, probably before the middle of the second century by Addai, a Jew from Palestine, who was not one of the seventy disciples of Christ, as Eusebius has it. But this, it must be noted, is just a surmise, from which, of course, it follows that Christianity was not introduced in Edessa in Apostolic times. Some of the writers in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* are also sceptical about the tradition as recorded by Eusebius, for instance, S. Vailhe, the writer on *Edessa* and Dom Chapman in his article on the *Doctrine of Addai*. They have probably relied on Dr. Burkitt, whose *Early Eastern Christianity* is referred to among other authorities. While Dr. Cureton's *Ancient Syriac Documents*, which contains the *Doctrine of Addæus*, is also mentioned by them, it is strange that they, as well as Dr. Burkitt, have lost sight of the *Doctrine of the Apostles* which is published in the same volume

of Dr. Cureton's and is besides an earlier document (second century), as this bears independent testimony to the fact that Edessa and the surrounding countries were evangelized in Apostolic times, and lends support to what Eusebius had subsequently written from the records of Edessa, while the *Doctrine of Addai* is of later date (about the beginning of the fifth century), and anachronisms¹ and discrepancies in it cannot reasonably raise doubts as to the veracity of the earlier documents. The following passage, which comes after other similar passages² relating to the Apostles named (pp. 34 and 35 of Dr. Cureton's work) is very explicit on the subject :

“Edessa and all its environs which were on all sides of it, and Soba, and Arabia, and all the North, and the regions round about it, and the South, and all the places of the borders of Mesopotamia, received the Apostles' Hand of Priesthood from Addæus, the Apostle, one of the seventy-two Apostles, who taught there and built a Church there, and was Priest and ministered there in his office of Guide there.”

¹ Dr. Cureton considered the passage containing the anachronism a barefaced interpolation of later date, and our contention justifies his view. *Ancient Syriac Documents*, p. 165.

² We have already quoted in our Preface one of these passages relating to St. Thomas, who is stated to have evangelized “India and all its own countries and those bordering on it, even to the farthest sea.”

As Edessa, then, plays no small part in the St. Thomas tradition, it is well to have some idea of its importance in the early ages. The following interesting sketch from Newman's *Development of Christian Doctrine* (pp. 291—297) will be found illuminating :

“Edessa, the metropolis of Mesopotamia, had remained an Oriental city till the third century, when it was made a Roman colony by Caracalla. Its position on the confines of two empires gave it great ecclesiastical importance, as the channel by which the theology of Rome and Greece was conveyed to a family of Christians, dwelling in contempt and persecution amid a still heathen world. It was the seat of various schools ; apparently of a Greek school, where the classics were studied as well as theology, where Eusebius of Emesa had originally been trained, and where perhaps Protophenes taught. There were also Syrian schools attended by heathen and Christian youths in common. The cultivation of the native language had been an especial object of its masters since the time of Vespasian, so that the pure and refined dialect went by the name of the Edessene. At Edessa too St. Ephrem formed his own Syrian school, which lasted long after him ; and there too was the celebrated Persian

Christian school, over which Maris presided, who has been already mentioned as the translator of Theodore into Persian. Even in the time of the predecessor of Ibas in the See (before A.D. 435) the Nestorianism of this Persian school was so notorious that Rabbula the Bishop had expelled its masters and scholars; and they, taking refuge in a country which might be called their own, had introduced the heresy to the Churches subject to the Persian King.

“Something ought to be said of these Churches; though little is known except what is revealed by the fact, in itself of no slight value, that they had sustained two persecutions at the hands of the heathen government in the fourth and fifth centuries. One testimony is extant as early as the end of the second century, to the effect that in Parthia, Media, Persia and Bactria there were Christians who ‘were not overcome by evil laws and customs.’ In the early part of the fourth century, a bishop of Persia attended the Nicene Council, and about the same time Christianity is said to have pervaded nearly the whole of Assyria. Monachism had been introduced there before the middle of the fourth century, and shortly after commenced that fearful persecution in which sixteen thousand Christians

are said to have suffered. It lasted thirty years, and is said to have recommenced at the end of the century. The second persecution lasted for at least another thirty years of the next, at the very time when the Nestorian troubles were in progress in the Empire. Trials such as these show the populousness as well as the faith of the Churches in those parts,—and the number of the Sees, for the names of twenty-seven Bishops are preserved who suffered in the former persecution. One of them was apprehended together with sixteen priests, nine deacons, besides monks and nuns of his diocese; another with twenty-eight companions, ecclesiastics or regulars; another with one hundred ecclesiastics of different orders; another with one hundred and twenty-eight; another with his chorepiscopus and two hundred and fifty of his clergy. Such was the Church, consecrated by the blood of so many martyrs, which immediately after its glorious confession fell a prey to the theology of Theodore; and which through a succession of ages manifested the energy, when it had lost the pure orthodoxy of Saints.”

We need not follow Newman in all the details he gives in this connection. It will suffice to note that the members of the Persian school,

who were expelled from Edessa, found a wide field open for their exertions under the pagan government with which they had taken refuge. The Persian monarchs who had often prohibited by edict the intercommunication of the Church under their sway with the countries towards the west, readily extended their protection to exiles, whose very profession was a means of destroying its Catholicity. Barsumas, the most energetic of them, who was placed in the metropolitan See of Nisibis, where also the fugitive school was settled, accused Babuæus, the Catholicus of Babylon, before King Pherozes, whispering, "These men hold the faith of the Romans, and are their spies. Give me power against them to arrest them." It is said that in this way he obtained the death of Babuæus, whom Acacius succeeded; and that when a minority resisted the process of schism, a persecution followed. The death of seven thousand seven hundred Catholics is said to have been the price of the severance of the Chaldaic Churches from Christendom. Their loss was compensated in the eyes of the government by the multitude of Nestorian fugitives, who flocked into Persia from the Empire, numbers of them industrious artisans, who sought a country where their own religion was in the ascendant.

That religion was founded, as we know, in the literal interpretation of Holy Scripture, of which Theodore was the principal teacher. The doctrine in which it formally consisted is known by the name of Nestorianism. It lay in the ascription of a human as well as a Divine Personality to our Lord; and it showed itself in denying the title of "Mother of God" to the Blessed Mary. Whatever might be the obscurity or plausibility of the original dogma, there is nothing obscure or attractive in the developments, whether of doctrine or of practice, in which it issued. The first act of the exiles of Edessa, on their obtaining power in the Chaldean communion, was to abolish the celibacy of the clergy, or, in Gibbon's forcible words, to allow "the public and reiterated nuptials of the priests, the bishops, and even the patriarch himself." Barsumas, the great instrument of the change of religion, was the first to set an example of the new usage, and is even said by a Nestorian writer to have married a nun. He passed a Canon at Councils, held at Seleucia and elsewhere, that bishops and priests might marry, and might renew their wives as often as they lost them. The Catholicus who followed Acacius went so far as to extend the benefit of the Canon to Monks, that is, to destroy the Monastic order; and his two

successors availed themselves of this liberty, and are recorded to have been fathers. A restriction, however, was afterwards placed upon the Catholicus, and upon the Episcopal order.

Such were the circumstances, and such the principles, under which the See of Seleucia became the Rome of the East.

This is a different picture to what we find in many histories as to the rise and growth of the Nestorian Church in the East. Although it continued to manifest the energy of the orthodox Church from which it separated, and spread wonderfully throughout Central and Eastern Asia, and even sent missionaries to govern and minister the Churches of the St. Thomas Christians in Southern India, yet, as Dr. Farquhar remarks in his article of January 1927 referred to in our Preface, "the whole vast community has almost entirely disappeared. War, persecution, and the rude methods of Oriental and Moslem government have sufficed to destroy it. Central Asia, the Chinese Empire, Siberia, India, Iran, Persia, Mesopotamia, all tell the same tale. Nestorianism in each of these lands, once splendidly strong, has utterly perished, or has left only the weakest possible remnants. Even the Church of Edessa—fertile seedplot of the whole

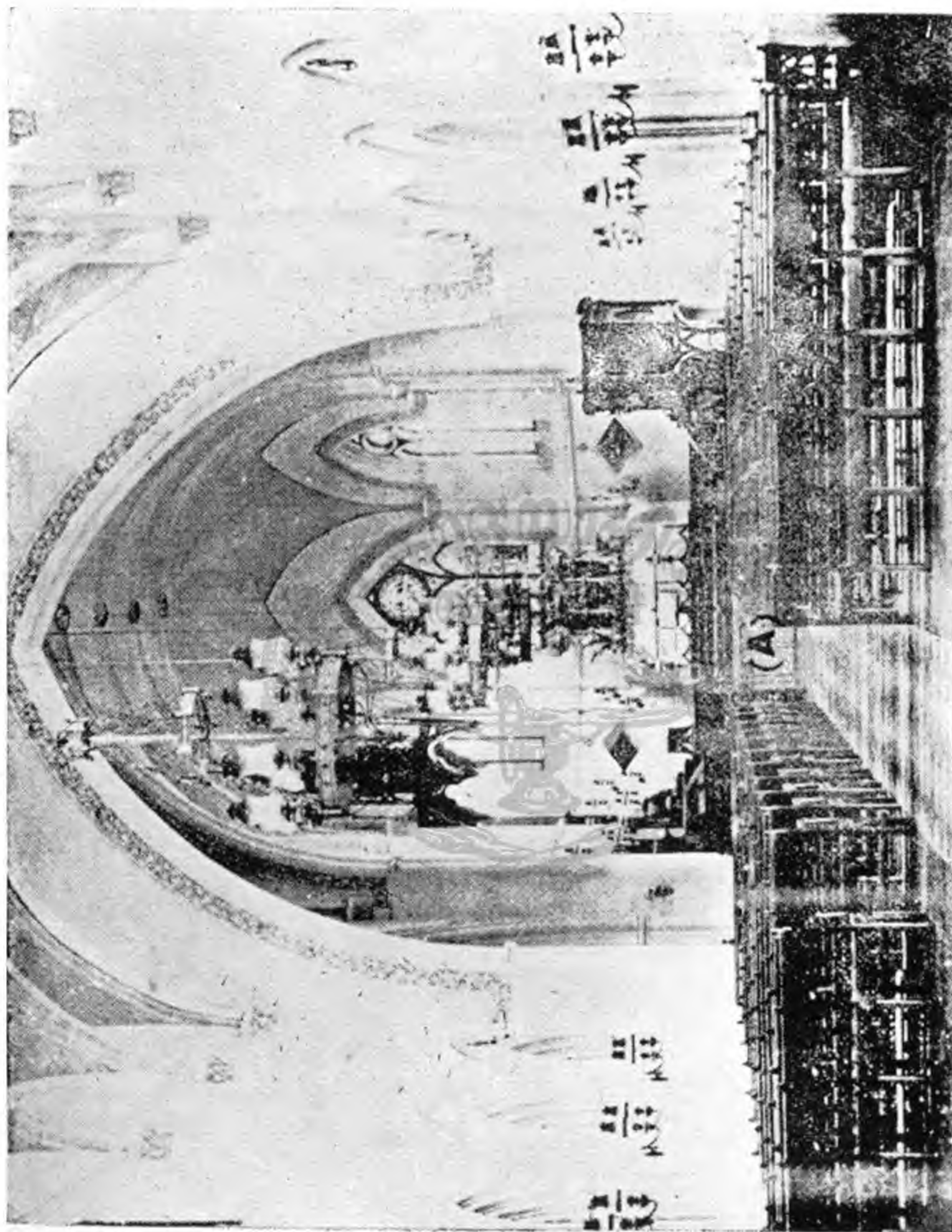
amazing growth—has utterly passed away!” And he adds:—“Surely this history, at once so noble and so pitiful, is proof that there was something lacking in Nestorian Christianity.” Yes, indeed, as Newman remarks, “it had lost the pure orthodoxy of Saints”; and so when adversity came to it, it had not the vitality to withstand the trials it was subjected to, as the parent Church from which it separated, has done the many severer shocks it has had to pass through, and remains to this day as vigorous as it ever was during the course of its long and eventful history of nearly two thousand years.

From what we have said at the beginning of this chapter, it will readily be understood how the Church of Edessa came to be specially interested in St. Thomas, who doubtless sent letters to it at different times from India; and how a merchant from Edessa thought himself privileged to carry away to that place the best part of the remains of St. Thomas from his tomb at Mylapore where, it is believed, he was originally buried.

III. THE TIME-HONOURED TRADITION.

As regards his subsequent career, tradition has it, to take the summary given in the *Roman Breviary*, that the Apostle Thomas, who was also called Didymus, a Galilean, after receiving the Holy Ghost, went to many countries to preach the Gospel of Christ; that he handed over the precepts of the Christian faith and life to the Parthians, the Medes, the Persians, the Hyrcanians and the Bactrians; that finally¹ betaking himself to the Indians he instructed them in the Christian religion; that when towards the end, by the sanctity of his life and doctrine and the greatness of his miracles, he aroused in all others admiration for himself and love for Jesus Christ, he greatly excited to anger the King of that nation, a worshipper of idols; and being con-

¹ It will be observed how Parthia and the countries bordering on it are grouped together, and then how India, in a way, is mentioned separately. This would seem to suggest two distinct missions, and accords with the belief that at the first dispersion of the Apostles after the Resurrection, Parthia fell to the lot of St. Thomas, and that at the second dispersion, when according to tradition they were all assembled together again at Jerusalem at the death of the Blessed Virgin, India then fell to his lot. It also explains how some early writers (see pages 75 and 120) came to mention only Parthia as having fallen to the lot of St. Thomas, while others mention only India; and makes it clear, besides, that they are not inconsistent with each other, as some critics have tried to maintain.



INTERIOR OF CATHEDRAL AT SAN THOME.

(A) TOMB OF ST. THOMAS.



demned by his sentence and pierced with arrows, he adorned the honour of the Apostolate with the crown of martyrdom at Calamina. This is supplemented by the information recorded in the *Roman Martyrology*, where it is further stated that his relics were first translated to Edessa and then to Ortona in Central Italy on the Adriatic.

Then there is the long-accepted belief that he not only visited the north of India, but also preached in Southern India, where he built churches and left congregations; that he proceeded first to the West Coast where the descendants of the early converts are known to this day as the St. Thomas' Christians; that he then went to the East Coast and preached there with such success that a large number of the people were converted; and that in the end he was martyred on St. Thomas' Mount and buried in San Thomé, now a suburb of Madras. And thus the glory of the introduction of Christianity in India has, by time-honoured tradition, been ascribed to St. Thomas, the Apostle.

PART II.

THE DISCUSSION.

I. CONNECTION WITH INDIA.

The question of St. Thomas' connection with India has been a subject of perennial interest, and quite a considerable amount of literature has grown around it, some maintaining that he preached only in the North and others that he preached also in the South and was martyred there. Mr. Vincent Smith in his *Oxford History of India*, 1923, remarks, that "the subject has been discussed by many authors from every possible point of view, and immense learning has been invoked in the hope of establishing one or other hypothesis, without reaching any conclusion approaching certainty." He himself is inclined to support the story of the martyrdom in the south. But he adds: "There is no reason to expect that additional evidence will be discovered." It may be so. But has Mr. Vincent Smith himself made the best of what evidence we have? It is hoped that the present investigation will show that the evidence already available is, from the new light that has been thrown on it, even stronger in support of the tradition connecting St. Thomas with Southern India than Mr. Vincent Smith has allowed, and

that those writers who are disposed to support the tradition only so far as to confine the Apostle's labours to the north of India are by no means justified in doing so.

The most comprehensive research on this subject is contained in that volume, published in 1905, entitled, "India and the Apostle Thomas," by Dr. A. E. Medlycott, at one time Vicar Apostolic of Trichur in the Cochin State. And yet it is curious to note that Dr. Burkitt in his article on St. Thomas in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* makes the remark that Dr. Medlycott's *India and the Apostle Thomas* is wholly uncritical, and Father Thurston in the bibliography attached to his article on the same subject in the *Catholic Encyclopædia* merely echoes the statement by referring to Dr. Medlycott's book, as a work written by a Catholic Vicar Apostolic, but uncritical in tone. Neither of these writers, however, assigns any reason for so sweeping a statement. It is well therefore to inquire how far these authors are justified in maintaining as against Dr. Medlycott that, while there is evidence to show that St. Thomas preached in the north of India, there is not sufficient evidence to support the tradition connecting the Apostle with Southern India.

As against the sweeping condemnation of Dr. Medlycott's work referred to, it would suffice to cite the opinion of the writer (J. Kennedy), who reviewed Dr. Medlycott's work in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for October 1906. This writer says: "In many respects he is well fitted for his task. He has a knowledge of Syriac, and he is acquainted with the local legends of Mylapore, and the latest researches of Indian scholars, as well as of English and German students of the Apocrypha. He brings an immense mass of material to the discussion--the Epitaph of Abercius, the Acts of Paul and Thekla, of Andrew, and of Archelaus; he gives the history of the Apostle's relics; and he goes through the evidence for an Indian Church before the days of Cosmas Indicopleustes. Moreover, he has given as his own special contribution to the subject extracts from the Church calendars and sacramentaries." And again when concluding his review Mr. Kennedy remarks: "If we are seldom convinced by the Bishop's arguments, we are thankful to him for the fullness of his materials and the antidote he offers to the ultra-sceptical position of Milne Rae." Thus, while refusing to accept some of Dr. Medlycott's conclusions, Mr. Kennedy does not grudge to acknowledge that he was well fitted for his task. Besides, as

Mr. Vincent Smith also testifies, Dr. Medlycott's book "supplies an invaluable collection of ecclesiastical texts" and "is full of abstruse learning." We can have no hesitation, therefore, in drawing upon Dr. Medlycott's materials, among others, for our present investigation, without accepting all he has to say on the subject.

The fault in Dr. Medlycott is that he is too diffuse, and "full of abstruse learning," as Mr. Vincent Smith has remarked, and he lays more stress on minor points than is necessary, and thus diverts the mind from the main issues. His object was to bring together a mass of evidence, not only to establish the truth of the tradition, but also to show that there was a persistent and constant tradition in the Church connecting the Apostle with Southern India. It is his method that has made him seem unsatisfactory to some critics.

The Rev. George Milne Rae, referred to by Mr. Kennedy, was once a Professor of the Christian College, Madras. He published a book in 1892 on *The Syrian Church in India*, in which he aimed at showing that St. Thomas preached only in that part of India which lies to the west of the Indus and not in the south. The aim of the present investigation is to show that there is no justification for confining St. Thomas's labours to

the north, and ignoring the weight of the evidence in favour of the Apostle's connection with the south.

A little before Dr. Medlycott published his book, an article appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for April 1905 on "St. Thomas and Gondophernes" by J. Fleet, I.C.S., PH.D., C.I.E. The writer here summed up the results of an investigation undertaken by Mr. W. R. Philipps in the *Indian Antiquary* (1903) from Western sources of information, and supplemented Mr. Philipps' work by an examination of an item obtained from Eastern sources by way of corroboration of the Western tradition. Dr. Burkitt considers that the best investigation of the traditions connecting St. Thomas with India is that by W. R. Philipps in the *Indian Antiquary*, while Father Thurston refers to Dr. Fleet's article as "his severely critical paper." We cannot do better, therefore, than begin with these authorities, and then turn to Dr. Medlycott and other sources as we proceed with the subject.

In the meantime it must be observed that Dr. Philipps himself in drawing up the *General Conclusions* arrived at as a result of his researches, put them forward as tentative, as he hoped that Dr. Medlycott, who was then writing his volume,

would afford us some fresh information, especially from recently explored Syriac sources. How far Dr. Medlycott has succeeded in throwing further light on the matter and how far more recent scholars have supported him will be seen from our present investigation.

Dr. Fleet says that Mr. Philipps has given us an exposition of the Western traditional statements up to the sixth century A.D., and that one decidedly important feature of his results is that they make it quite clear, even to those who have not specially studied the matter, that we are not in any way dependent upon apocryphal writings or upon certain later works which he specifies, as the tradition goes back to much more ancient times and is based upon far better authority. And taking only some of the most ancient statements, Dr. Fleet finds that, in its earliest traceable form, the tradition runs thus :—

According to the Syriac work entitled, *the Doctrine of the Apostles*, which was written, he says, in perhaps the second century A.D., St. Thomas evangelized “India.” St. Ephraem, the Syrian (born about A.D. 300, died 373), who spent the latter portion of his life at Edessa in Mesopotamia, states that the Apostle was martyred in “India,” and that his relics were taken thence to

Edessa. That St. Thomas evangelized the Parthians is stated by Origen (born A.D. 185 or 186, died about 251—254). Eusebius (Bishop of Cæsarea Palæstinae from A.D. 315 to about 340) says the same. And the same statement is made by the “Clementine Recognitions,” the original of which may have been written about A.D. 210.

The passages in the *Doctrine of the Apostles* referred to above which connects St. Thomas distinctly with India are of special importance and are quoted below :

“And after the death of the Apostles there were Guides and Rulers in the Churches, and whatever the Apostles communicated to them, and they had received from them, they taught to the multitudes all the time of their lives. They again at their deaths also committed and delivered to their disciples after them every thing which they had received from the Apostles, also what James had written from Jerusalem, and Simon from the City of Rome, and John from Ephesus, and Mark from the great Alexandria, and Andrew from Phrygia, and Luke from Macedonia, and Judas Thomas from India, that the epistles of an Apostle might be received and read in the churches, in every place, like those

Triumphs of their Acts, which Luke wrote, are read, that by this the Apostles might be known”

“India and all its own countries, and those bordering on it, even to the farthest sea, received the Apostles’ Hand of Priesthood from Judas Thomas, who was Guide and Ruler in the Church which he built there and ministered there.”

From the first of these quotations it will be observed that St. Thomas wrote letters from India, and the other Apostles named from the countries they had evangelized, and that these letters were read in the churches in every place where they were received. This is a point on which Dr. Farquhar lays special stress in his articles in the “Bulletin of the John Ryland’s Library”, January 1926 and January 1927, which other writers seem to have overlooked. He argues that even if these letters were destroyed through the vicissitudes of the times, they were sufficient to establish a tradition which would be handed down from generation to generation of what the Apostles had done in the lands visited by them. It is easily conceivable, therefore, that the *Acts of Judas Thomas*, which Dr. Fleet refers to next

and which some scholars regard as a novel¹, is nevertheless based on the tradition then current in the Eastern Churches, though written with a purpose, to propagate especially the doctrine of continence even in a married state. It is believed to have been written by the Gnostic Bardesanes who died in 222 A.D.

To return to Dr. Fleet, then, we may well follow him when he says that a fuller tradition is found in *the Acts of St. Thomas*, which exists in Syriac, Greek, Latin, Armenian, Ethiopian and Arabic, and in a fragmentary form in Coptic; and that this work connects with St. Thomas two Eastern Kings, whose names appear in the Syriac version as Gudnaphar, Gundaphar, and Mazdai. The Syriac version of the Acts, he says, may be regarded as the original one², and as more likely than the others to present fragments of genuine history. It dates back, according to Dr. Wright to not later than the fourth century; while Dr. Burkitt would place the composition of it before the middle of the third century, and Lipsius would seem to have placed it in or about

¹ Burkitt.—*Early Eastern Christianity*, p. 198. Farquhar in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, Jan. 1926, p. 80.

² This view is now maintained by nearly every Syriac scholar. Burkitt. *Early Eastern Christianity*, p. 205.





STAINED GLASS, CATHEDRAL,
TOURS, FRANCE.

(See *Explanation* p. iii.)

A.D. 232. Harnack, according to Fr. Thurston in the *Catholic Encyclopædia*, assigns to it even an earlier date, before A.D. 220.

The substance of the tradition as given in the Syriac version of the *Acts*¹ is as follows:—

When the Apostles had been for a time in Jerusalem, they divided the countries among them in order that each one might preach in the region which fell to him; and India fell to the lot of Judas Thomas. But he was not willing to go, saying: 'I have not strength enough for this because I am weak. And I am a Hebrew: how can I teach the Indians?' And while Judas was reasoning thus, our Lord appeared to him in a vision at night and said to him: 'Fear not Thomas, because my grace is with thee' But he would not be persuaded at all, saying: 'Withersoever Thou wilt, our Lord, send me; only to India I will not go.' And as Judas was reasoning thus, a certain merchant, an Indian happened to come into the south Country from².....His name was Habban, and he

¹ Throughout the *Acts* Judas Thomas, the Apostle, is assumed to be the twin brother of our Lord.

² Here the name of the place is illegible in the Syriac MS in the British Museum. The Sachan MS. in Berlin and the one in Cambridge give a different version: "A certain merchant came *from* the south country." As the scene is laid in Jerusalem just a few lines earlier, to talk of a merchant, an Indian, coming from Gudnaphar into the south country, is unmeaning. The version, "came from the south country," in the Berlin and Cambridge MSS. would seem, therefore, to be correct. Cf. Philipps, 4 of Reprint; Vath, 6, n. 1.

was sent by King Gudnaphar that he might bring him a skilled carpenter. Our Lord saw him walking in the street and said to him. "Thou wishest to buy a carpenter"? He said to him, "Yes." Our Lord said to him, "I have a slave, a carpenter, whom I will sell to thee." And He showed him Thomas at a distance, and bargained with him for twenty pieces of silver as his price. On the bargain being settled by a bill of sale being written out Jesus took Judas and went to Habban, the merchant. And Habban saw him and said to him: "Is this thy master?" Judas said to him: "Yes, he is my master." Habban the merchant said to him: "He has sold thee to me outright." And Judas was silent. And in the morning he arose and prayed and entreated of his Lord, and said to Him: "Lo, our Lord, as Thou wilt, let Thy will be done." And he went to Habban the merchant, without carrying anything with him, except that price of his, for our Lord had given it to him. He found Habban carrying his goods on board the ship and he began to carry them on board with him¹. On the ship, in answer to Habban's questions, Thomas told him he was skilled in "carpentering and architecture—the business of the carpenter;" also: "In wood I have learned to make ploughs and yokes and ox-goads, and oars for ferry boats and masts for ships; and in stones, tombstones and monuments, and palaces for Kings." Habban replied: "And I was seeking such an artificer."

¹ Probably they sailed from the nearest port to Jerusalem — Jaffa, or from Cæsarea to the north of it.

After sailing along for some time, they disembark at Sandaruk, and were going into the city, when they were told of the marriage feast of the King's only daughter, and that every one was obliged to be present. So they thought they had better go. At the feast Thomas sings a hymn. He also prophecies the violent death of one of the guests who had behaved rudely to him, an event that comes to pass that very night. The King hears of this and forces Thomas to go in and pray over the bride; he does so and then departs. But when the bride and bridegroom are alone our Lord appears to them in the likeness of Thomas and persuades them both to a life of virginity. In the end the King also is converted and the young couple join St. Thomas in India.

Meanwhile Thomas and Habban had gone on to King Gundaphar in India and Thomas is set to build a palace for the king. As this part of the story forms a complete episode by itself, and is most interesting, we give below the story as narrated by the Syriac writer himself, from the *English Translation of the Apocryphal Acts* by Dr. Wright, as reproduced by Dr. Burkitt in his *Early Eastern Christianity*. It goes far to confirm the latter's estimate of the *Acts*, which, he says, is the most striking and original piece of Syriac Literature, and that the outside world knows very little of a tale that can challenge comparison with the *Pilgrim's Progress*. He also

remarks that with the *Acts of St. Thomas*, as with all good literature, it is better to let the book speak for itself. The following then is the story of how Judas Thomas the Apostle came into India and built a palace for the King in Heaven.

“And when Judas had entered into the realm of India with the merchant Habban, Habban went to salute Gundaphar the King of India, and he told him of the artificer whom he had brought for him. And the King was very glad, and ordered Judas to come into his presence. And the King said to him: ‘What art dost thou know to practise?’ Judas saith to him: ‘I am a carpenter, the servant of a carpenter and architect.’ He saith to him: ‘What dost thou know how to make?’ Judas saith to him: ‘In wood I know how to make yokes and ploughs and oxgoads, and oars for barges and ferry boats and masts for ships; and in hewn stone, tombstones and monuments and palaces for Kings.’ The King saith to Judas: ‘And I want such an artificer.’ The King saith to him: ‘Wilt thou build me a palace?’ Judas saith to him: ‘I will build it and finish it, for I am come to work at building and carpentering.’

“And he took him and went outside the gate of the city, and was talking with him about the constructing of the palace, and about its foundations how they should be laid. And when he had reached the place where the King wished him to build a palace for him he said to Judas: ‘Here I wish you to build for me a palace.’ Judas saith to

him : 'Yes, for this is a place which is suitable for it.' Now it was of this sort ; it was a meadow, and there was plenty of water near it. The King saith to him : 'Begin to build here.' Judas saith to him : 'Now I cannot build at this time.' The King saith to him : 'And at what time wilt thou be able to build?' Judas saith : I will begin in Autumn and I will finish in Spring.' The King saith to him : 'All buildings are built in summer ; and dost thou build in winter?' Judas saith to him : 'Thus only is it possible for the palace to be built.' The King saith to him : 'Well then, trace it out for me that I may see it, because it is a long time before I shall come hither.' And Judas came and took a cane and began to measure ; and he left doors towards the east for light, and windows towards the west for air, and they made the bake-house to the south, and the water-pipes for the service of the house to the north. The King saith to him : 'Verily thou art a good artificer and worthy to serve a King.' And he left a large sum of money and departed from him, and more silver and gold he was sending to him from time to time.

"But Judas was going about in the villages and in the cities, and was ministering to the poor and was making the afflicted comfortable, and he was saying : 'What is the King's to the King's shall be given, and rest there shall be for many.'

"And after a long time the King despatched messengers to Judas and sent to him thus : 'Send me word what thou hast done and what I shall send thee.' And Judas sent him word : 'The palace is built, but the roof

is wanting to it.' Then the King sent to Judas silver and gold, and sent him word: 'Let the palace be roofed.' And the Apostle was glorifying our Lord and saying: 'I thank Thee Lord, who didst die that Thou mightest give me life; and who didst sell me that I might be the liberator of many.' And he did not cease to teach and to relieve those who were afflicted, saying: 'May your Lord give you rest, to whom alone is the glory; for He is the nourisher of the orphans and the provider of the widows, and He ministers unto all those who are afflicted.'

"And when the King came to the city, he was asking every one of his friends about the palace which Judas had built for him; but they say unto him: 'There is no palace built, nor has he done anything else but going about the cities and the villages and giving to the poor and teaching them the new God, and also healing the sick and driving out demons and doing many like things; and we declare that he is a sorcerer, but his compassion and his healing, which was done without recompense, and his asceticism and his piety declare about him that either he is a Magian or an Apostle of the new God. For he fasts much and prays much and eats bread and salt and drinks water and wears one garment, and takes nothing from any man for himself, and whatever he has he gives to others.' And when the King heard these things, he smote his face with his hands and was shaking his head.

"And he sent and called Judas and the merchant who had bought him, and said to him: 'Hast thou built me

the palace?' Judas saith to him: 'I have built thee the palace.' The King saith to him: 'When can we go and look at it?' Judas saith to him: 'Thou canst not see it now, but when thou hast departed from this world.' Then the King became furious in his anger, and commanded that Thomas and the merchant who had brought him should go in bonds to prison, till he could question him about his doings, to whom he had given the treasure, and then destroy him. But Judas went rejoicing and said to the merchant: 'Fear not, but only believe and thou shalt be freed from this world, and shalt receive everlasting life in the world to come.'

"And the King was considering by what death he should kill Judas and the merchant; and he took the resolution that he would flay him alive and burn him with the merchant his companion. And in that very night the King's brother whose name was Gad, was taken ill through grief and through the imposition which had been practised on the King. And he sent and called the King and said to him: 'My brother, I commend unto thee my house and my children, for I am grieved and am dying because of the imposition that hath been practised upon thee. If thou dost not punish that sorcerer, thou wilt not let my soul be at peace in sheol.' The King saith to him: 'The whole night I have been considering how I should kill him and I have resolved to flay him alive and burn him.' Then the King's brother said to him: 'And if there be anything worse than this, do it to him; and I give thee ~~the~~ of my house and my children.'



“And when he had said these things, his soul left him. And the King was grieved for his brother, because he loved him much, and he was intending to bury him in a splendid grave. But when the soul of Gad, the King’s brother, had left him, angels took it and bore it up to heaven; and they were showing it each place in succession, to see in which of them it wished to be. Then, when they came to the palace which Judas had built for the King, his brother saw it and said to the angels: ‘I beg of you, my lords, let me dwell in one of the lower chambers of this palace.’ The angels say to him: ‘Thou canst not dwell in this palace.’ He saith to them: ‘Wherefore?’ They say to him: ‘This palace is the one which the Christian had built for thy brother.’ Then he said to them: ‘I beg of you, my lords, let me go, that I may go and buy of him this palace; for my brother doth not understand the matter and he will sell it to me.’

“Then the angels let go the soul of Gad. And as his body was being enshrouded, his soul came into him, and he said to those who were standing before him: ‘Call my brother to me that I may make of him one request.’ Then they sent word to the King: ‘Thy brother is come to life.’ And the King sprang up from his place and went into the house of his brother with a number of people. And when he had gone in beside the bed, he was astounded and unable to speak with him. His brother saith to him: ‘I know, my brother, that if a man had asked thee for the half of thy Kingdom thou wouldst have given it for my sake. And now I beg of thee that thou sell me that at which thou

hast laboured.' The King saith to him: 'Tell me, what shall I seil thee?'" He saith to him: 'Swear unto me.' And he sware unto him that he would grant him whatever he asked of all that he had. He saith to him: 'Sell me the palace which thou hast in heaven.' The King saith to him: 'Who hath given me a palace in heaven?' His brother saith to him: 'That which the Christian hath built for thee.' Then the King understood, and he said to his brother: 'That I cannot sell to thee; but I pray and beg of God that I may enter into it and receive it, and may be worthy to be among its inhabitants. And thou, if thou dost really wish to buy thyself a palace, this architect will build one for thee which will be better than that of mine.' And the King sent and brought out Judas and the merchant who was imprisoned with him, and said to him: 'I beg of thee as a man who begs a minister of God that thou wouldst pray for me, and beg for me from the God that thou worshippest, that He would forgive me what I have done unto thee, and that he would make me worthy to enter into the palace which thou hast built for me, and that I may become a worshipper of this God whom thou preachest.' "

Thus the King and his brother were converted and were baptised by Judas Thomas; and with them a large number of the people were also converted.

St. Thomas continues preaching in the villages and cities, and certain miraculous events and conversions in and about the city of King Gundaphar are narrated.

After this¹ while the Apostle "was preaching throughout all India," the General of King Mazdai, named Sifur, came to beseech him to deliver his wife and daughter from unclean demons. After the General had confessed his faith in Christ, Thomas agrees to his wish. He then takes leave of his converts, whom he places in charge of Xanthippus the deacon, and sets out with the General who had come in a "chariot" drawn by "cattle." On the way the cattle break down, but four wild asses come up to be harnessed in their stead, and these bring the chariot to the city and stop at the gate of the General's court-yard. Thomas drives the devil out of the General's wife and daughter and leads the wild asses outside the gate, whence they return to their pasture. As the Apostle returns to the General's house Mygdonia, the wife of Karish, a relative of the King, is brought in a palanquin. She falls at the feet of Thomas and is converted to a life of continence and poverty. Karish is in despair; and when his personal influence fails to move Mygdonia, he goes and complains to the King, by whose orders Thomas is arrested at the house of Sifur the General, and is scourged and sent to prison, where he sings a Hymn, known as the famous Hymn of the soul which went down to Egypt for the one Pearl. Mygdonia remains firm and secretly visits Thomas in prison with her nurse Narquia. There he baptises them and gives them Communion. In the meanwhile King Mazdai and Karish, who regard the conversion of Mygdonia

¹ This is how the seventh Act begins; but, as Mr. Philipps says, it does not say where he was at the time, though the words quoted might imply an interval of years between the sixth and seventh Acts.

as due to magic and enchantment, agree to let Thomas go if he will tell her to be as she was before. Thomas warns them that it will be useless and that neither his persuasion nor tortures would change her new spirit. This is proved to be the case, for Mygdonia refuses to listen to the Apostle when he pretends to counsel her to go back to her husband. After this Thomas returns to the house of Sifur the General and baptises him and his family, and gives them Communion. At the same time Tertia, the wife of King Mazdai, who had heard from the King of what had befallen Karish, goes next morning to visit Mygdonia and finds her seated in penitential robes bemoaning her fate. She expostulates with her at what she beholds, but Mygdonia discloses to her the new life and Tertia is at once fired with the desire to see and hear the prophet of the new faith. She goes to the Apostle at once and converses with him, and returns home full of the new ideas she had imbibed. The King inquires of her why she returned on foot—a thing beneath her dignity. Tertia passes the remark by and thanks him for sending her to Mygdonia. She adds, she had heard the new life and had seen the Apostle of the new God, and avowed her change of mind.

Her husband's astonishment was great. He rushes out, meets Karish, upbraids him for dragging him also into 'sheol,' and says: 'He had bewitched Tertia also.' They go to the General's house and assault the Apostle; and he is ordered to be brought to the seat of judgment. While Thomas is detained there by the guard, the King's

son, Vizan, enters the hall. He takes Thomas and converses with him. Thomas brought to judgment is interrogated. The King becomes enraged and orders plates of iron to be heated, and the Apostle is made to stand on them bare-footed; whereupon a copious spring of water suddenly gushes out from the earth, when the fire is extinguished, the plates are immersed, and the executioners fly in terror. The Apostle is then remanded to prison, and the General and the King's son accompany him. The latter asks leave to go and bring his wife Manashar. Tertia, Mygdonia and Narkia, having bribed the guard, also enter the prison, when each narrates the trials she had to endure.

On hearing all this Thomas offers thanks to God. Vizan is told to go and prepare what is needful for the service which is to follow. On the way he meets his wife Manashar. Thomas overtakes them, accompanied by Sifur, his wife and daughter, also Mygdonia with Tertia and Narkia: They all entered the house of Vizan; it was then night. After praying and addressing them, the Apostle asks Mygdonia to prepare the women for baptism. They are then baptised, and the Eucharist is celebrated and they all receive Holy Communion. The Apostle then left them and returned of his own accord to prison; and it is added: "they were grieved and were weeping because they knew King Mazdai would kill him."

On the King having decided on the Apostle's death, he hesitated as to what orders he should issue, 'because he was afraid of the great multitude that was there present,

and because many believed in the Lord even of the King's nobles.' The King therefore decided on taking Thomas away from the crowd. He made him accompany him under a guard to a distance of about half a mile beyond the town, and then said to them, 'Go up on the mountain and stab him.' On their reaching the top of the hill Thomas asked to be allowed to pray, and having done so, he bid the soldiers execute the order they had received. 'The soldiers then came and struck him all together, and he fell down and died.'

'And the brethren were weeping all together. And they brought goodly garments and many linen cloths, and buried Judas in the sepulchre in which the ancient Kings were buried.'

Before his death he had ordained Sifur and Vizan, and the converts continue in the faith after having been encouraged by a vision of the ascended Judas Thomas.

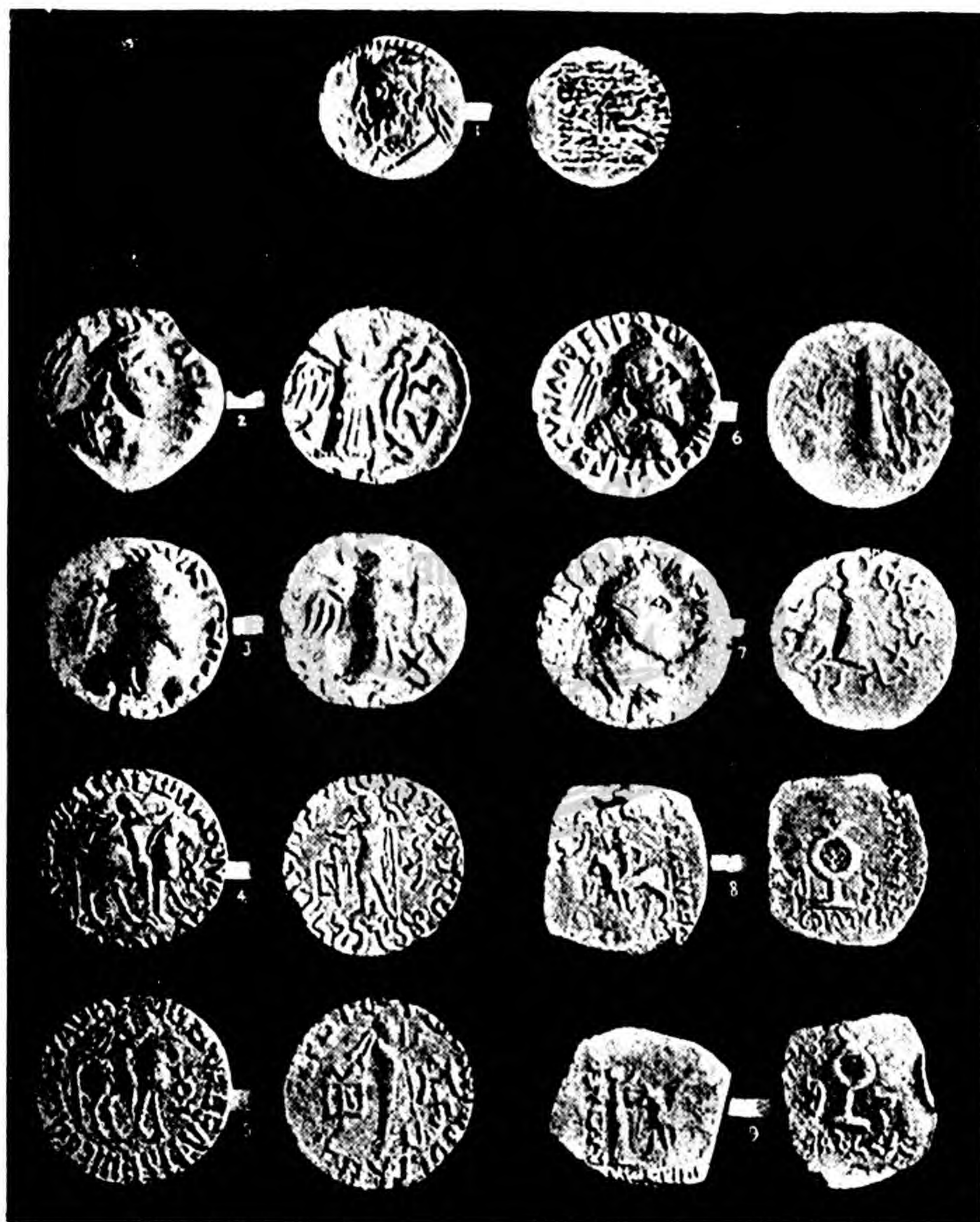
A long time after, a son of Mazdai, fell ill, possessed by an evil spirit. The King wants a relic of the saint to lay it on the sick person. He does not find the remains any more, as some of the brethren have carried them away to the West. Thereupon he takes dust from the grave and puts it on his son, invoking the name of Jesus. His son is healed and the King is converted and prays Sifur and the brethren for forgiveness.

Of course, we are concerned here only with the main features of the tale, which a persistent tradition carried from age to age has kept alive to this day, and has lent support to the belief that

they are the historical basis upon which the whole superstructure is built. Variations, therefore, between the details of that superstructure and local traditions are to be expected and need not disconcert us much, as they only go to show the independent sources from which they are derived, and confirm the historicity of the main features of the tradition in which they agree. And then there has been much discussion over the names in the *Acts*, which are a mixture of Latin, Greek, Iranian and Semitic. As at present, so in those early days, people of many nationalities were found congregated in the principal centres of trade, especially in the East; and as the work in question is believed to be a novel, though with an historical basis and a purpose, we may reasonably assume that the author took the liberty of inventing most of his names.

However, to return again to Dr. Fleet, the Greek, Latin, and other versions, as he says, give sundry additional details, besides presenting variants of the names of the persons and places. But, the important point is, as Dr. Fleet remarks, that a Christian tradition, current in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Asia Minor, and all those parts as far as Italy, and connecting St. Thomas with Parthia and "India" and with two "Indian" Kings whom





COINS OF KING GONDOPHARES.

it specifically names, is traceable back to, at any rate, the third or fourth century of the Christian era, and perhaps to the second quarter of the third century. But as the Christian tradition taken in its details and in its external bearings would seem to require corroboration of some kind or other from external sources, the required corroboration has been found in coins which from 1834 onwards have been obtained from Beghram in the vicinity of Kabul, from Pathankot in the Gurdaspur district of the Punjab on the north-east of Amritsar, from Kandahar, and from various places in Sindh and Seistan, bearing the name of one of the Kings, Gondopheres, mentioned in the tradition. But again as these coins are not dated and there was further wanted an epigraphic record which should present a date in some era, capable of being recognized as a date of Gondopheres, and adaptable to the tradition, it has happened that the desideratum was at length supplied by the discovery, in or about 1857, of what is known as the Takht-i-Bahi inscription, which is now in the Lahore Museum.

We need not pursue the investigation undertaken by Dr. Fleet in connection with the coins and the inscription. It is sufficient to note that the result, placing the commencement of the reign

of Guduphara-Gondophernes in A.D. 20 or 21, and establishing the fact that in A.D. 46 his dominions included, in India itself, at any rate the territory round about Peshawar, is, as remarked by Dr. Fleet, reached from the Takht-i-Bahi inscription and the coins, without any help from the Christian tradition; while as regards the tradition itself, it gives us, in just the period for the death of St. Thomas, a King, Guduphara-Gondophernes, whose name can be satisfactorily identified with that of the Gudnaphar, Gundaphar, Goundapharos, and Gundaforus of the tradition, and who would be quite properly mentioned as a King of India or of the Indians, so that Dr. Fleet naturally concludes that the evidence so far is at least strongly suggestive of the fact "that there is an actual basis for the tradition in historical reality, and that St. Thomas did proceed to the East, and visited the courts of two kings reigning there, of whom one was the Guduphara-Gondophernes of the Takht-i-Bahi inscription and the coins," who, judging from the wide range of the localities from which the coins were obtained, was evidently the powerful ruler "of an extensive territory, which included, as a part of it, much more of India than simply a portion of the Peshawar district."





STAINED GLASS, CATHEDRAL,
BOURGES, FRANCE.

(See *Explanation* p. iv.)

II. IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

Up to this point most authorities are agreed. It is when they come to locate the territory over which the second King, Mazdai, reigned, the King mentioned in the *Acts of St. Thomas* as the one in whose dominions he brought his apostolic labours to a close by receiving the martyr's crown, that some of them have been led astray. Dr. Fleet thinks that the suggestion made by M. Sylvain Levi to take the name Mazdai as a transformation of a Hindu name, made on Iranian soil and under Mazdean influences, and arrived at through the forms Bazodēo, Bazdēo, or Bāzodēo Bāzdēo, which occur in Greek legends on coins, and to identify the person with King Vasudeva of Mathura, a successor of Kanishka, is not unreasonable; and he accordingly ends his paper by remarking that the other king whom the Apostle visited was very possibly Vasudeva of Mathura. The suggestion that Mazdai may be a transformation of a Hindu name seems reasonable; but the attempt to identify the person with King Vasudeva of Mathura is rather far-fetched, as will be shown presently.

Now, much depends on the acceptance of this theory of M. Levi; for it follows that, if

St. Thomas was put to death in the Kingdom of Mathura in the north, he could not have been martyred at St. Thomas' Mount in the south. It is no surprise, therefore, to find Dr. Fleet making the statement that there is no evidence at all that the place where St. Thomas was martyred was anywhere in Southern India. But Dr. Fleet admits that the question of identifying Mazdai with King Vasudeva of Mathura is not a matter of the same certainty as it is in the case of King Gondophernes, and that it is possible that some other conclusion might be formed in respect of the name Mazdai, either by means of Persian history or legend or in any other way. In fact Dr. Medlycott puts forward a more reasonable suggestion and we shall presently refer to it, after showing that the theory of M. Levi cannot well be maintained.

Father Thurston in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* following in the wake of Dr. Fleet, whose article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, he refers to, as we said, as a "severely critical paper," also accepted the suggestion of M. Levi, and hence also he naturally finds it "difficult to discover any adequate support for the long-accepted belief that St. Thomas pushed his missionary journeys as far south as Mylapore not far from

Madras, and there suffered martyrdom.” Apart from the main point, there is a little confusion here in Fr. Thurston’s mind. Mylapore is included in Madras. The tradition is that the Apostle was martyred at St. Thomas Mount near Madras, that is, as the *Acts* say, ‘on a mountain outside the city,’ and was buried in Mylapore on the sea coast, that particular spot or village being called *San Thome* after the Apostle.

When Dr. Fleet, in his article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, for April 1905, accepted M. Levi’s suggestion to identify King Mazdai with King Vasudeva of Mathura in the north, Dr. Fleet, according to his own calculation, allotted B.C. 58 as the commencement of Kanishka’s reign, so that Vasudeva who was one of his successors was apparently contemporary with Gondophares; but Dr. Fleet writing subsequently in 1910 in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (see *Inscriptions, Indian*), while adhering to B.C. 58 as the year when Kanishka began to reign, says that he was succeeded by Vasishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva and that then the dynasty of Kanishka was succeeded by a foreign ruler, Gondophares, who, he adds, is well known to Christian tradition in connection with the mission of St. Thomas, the Apostle, to the East. Thus, according to

Dr. Fleet himself, Vasudeva could not have been the King who put the Apostle to death if the latter was alive during the reign of Gondophares, who, as he says, succeeded Vasudeva. Dr. Fleet apparently could no longer support the theory to identify King Mazdai with Vasudeva when he wrote in 1910, as he does not say anything in that article as to whether Vasudeva was in any way connected with St. Thomas.

Again, Mr. Vincent Smith, in the third edition of his *Early History of India* published in 1914, not only questioned the correctness of Dr. Fleet's chronology and showed that the relegation of Kanishka to B.C. 58 was wholly out of the question, but placed in that volume the accession to the throne of that monarch in about 78 A.D., remarking that it was possible that the true date might be even later. In his more recent work, *the Oxford History of India*, 1919, he says, "further consideration of the evidence from Taxila now available leads me to follow Sir John Marshall and Professor Sten Konow in dating the beginning of Kanishka's reign approximately in A.D. 120, a date which I had advocated many years ago on different grounds." The same remark is repeated in the second edition of *the Oxford History of India* revised by S. M. Edwardes and

published in 1923, while the fourth edition of *the Early History of India* also revised by the same writer and published in 1924 assumes that Kanishka succeeded Kadphises II in or about A.D. 120. From the former it appears that Kanishka reigned about forty years. Vasishka, mentioned before as Kanishka's immediate successor according to Dr. Fleet, was, Mr. Vincent Smith says, one of his sons and Viceroy, who predeceased the father, who was therefore, really succeeded by Huvishka in A.D. 160, who in turn was succeeded by Vasudeva in A.D. 182, so that according to Mr. Vincent Smith, Vasudeva came too late to be the second king whom the Apostle is said to have visited and by whose orders he was put to death. In either case the suggestion to identify King Mazdai with Vasudeva of Mathura falls to the ground; and with it the inference based on this theory that St. Thomas was martyred by a king who reigned in the north, and that therefore his martyrdom could not have taken place at St. Thomas' Mount in the south.

As we stated before, Dr. Fleet admitted that the question of identifying Mazdai with King Vasudeva of Mathura in the north was not a matter of the same certainty as in the case of King Gondophares, and that it is possible that

some other conclusion might be formed in respect of the name Mazdai, either by means of Persian history or legend or in any other way; and we remarked then, that Dr. Medlycott had in fact put forward a more reasonable suggestion. Having now conclusively shown that the Mazdai-Vasudeva theory is altogether untenable, we shall proceed to examine Dr. Medlycott's suggestion.

Although the point we have investigated did not occur to Dr. Medlycott as he wrote his book in 1905, he discusses the suggestion made by M. Levi on other grounds and shows how far-fetched the idea is to attempt to identify Mazdai with Vasudeva, while as suggested by him there can be nothing unreasonable in identifying the name of the king who was responsible for the martyrdom of St. Thomas with *Mahadeva*. He points out that not only in the north, but also in the south, Indian Kings were in the habit of incorporating the epithet of the divinity with their own names, and instances the fact of one of the rulers of the Warangal dynasty bearing the name of Mahadeva. We may add that a glance at Sewell's *Dynasties of Southern India* shows how common it was for the Kings of the South Indian dynasties to not only affix but also prefix the term *Deva* to their names, and that the name *Mahadeva* itself occurs

also among the rulers of other dynasties of Southern India, such as Orissa, Vijayanagar and the Yadavas of Devagiri. It is by no means unreasonable, therefore, to conclude that the name of the king who had St. Thomas martyred was very probably *Mahadeva*, which would be popularly contracted into *Mahdeo*. "Now," remarks Dr. Medlycott, "if the name Mahadeo be passed through Iranian mouths, it will probably assume the form of 'Masdeo,' owing to the similarity of sound with the Iranian name Mazdai, the sibilant would be introduced, and the outcome of Mahadeo or Madeo would be Masdeo, and would appear in Syriac as Mazdai."

Mr. Vincent Smith, again, when he wrote the *second edition* of his *Early History of India* in 1908, was absolutely opposed to the tradition connecting St. Thomas with Southern India, as a result probably of relying mainly on W. R. Philipps and Milne-Rae; but he considerably modified his views when he published the *third edition* of his history in 1914¹, and justified the change in his attitude towards it in an appendix embodied in this edition (p. 245). While admitting (p. 234) that "the traditional association

¹ See fourth edition published in 1924 already referred to where the same views are held.

of the name of the Apostle with that of King Gondophares is in no way at variance with the generally received chronology of the reign of the latter as deduced from coins and an inscription," he points out that, on the other hand, "there is no trace of the subsequent existence of a Christian community in the dominions which had been ruled by Gondophares."

Dr. Farquhar in his article on St. Thomas in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* of January 1926, explains that this was due to the fact that within a few years of the arrival of Thomas in Taxila, the whole empire of Gudnaphar was overthrown by the Kushans; that the destruction was so complete that the very memory of the great dynasty was utterly obliterated; so much so, that in no ancient history, Indian, Persian or Greek, is there the slightest reference to Gudnaphar or the earlier kings of the dynasty. Until the spade brought their coins and inscriptions to light, nothing was known about this mighty line of monarchs, except the mention of Gudnaphar and Gad in the *Acts of Judas Thomas*; and that was believed to be mythical. The cataclysm may have come shortly after the arrival of Thomas, before a Church of any size could be formed; but, even if the Apostle had already won a considerable

number of converts and had organized a growing Church, the utter destruction of the Scytho-Parthian empire supplies sufficient explanation of the fact that no trace of his work remains in early Indian records.

Mr. Vincent Smith allows, however, that “unless a Christian mission connected by tradition with the rite of St. Thomas had visited the Indo-Parthian border land it is difficult to imagine how the obscure name of Gondophares can have come into the story.” Accordingly he thinks that “if anybody chooses to believe that St. Thomas personally visited the Indo-Parthian Kingdom, his belief cannot be considered unreasonable,” as “it is possible that as Dr. Medlycott suggests, he may have first visited Gondophares and then travelled to Southern India.” In any case he does not accept the story of the Apostle’s *martyrdom* in the north, for he says, “if there be any truth in the tradition that the Apostle was martyred at St. Thomas’ Mount near Madras, he cannot possibly have suffered in the Kingdom of Mazdai,” taking it for granted that King Mazdai reigned in the north.

It is surprising that it did not occur to Mr. Vincent Smith, while declining to accept the story of the Apostle’s *martyrdom* in the north,

to question the theory identifying King Mazdai of the *Acts* with Vasudeva of the north, seeing that his own chronology of the reign of the latter was at variance with the time of the Apostle, and made it impossible for him to accept such a suggestion. Had he noticed this discrepancy, he would probably have been still more emphatic and whole-hearted in his support of the tradition connecting the martyrdom of St. Thomas with Southern India, than we find he is in the following admissions contained in his latest works :—

“It must be admitted that a personal visit of the Apostle to Southern India was easily feasible in the conditions of the time, and that there is nothing incredible in the traditional belief that he came by way of Socotra, where an ancient Christian settlement undoubtedly existed. The actual fact of such personal visit cannot be either proved or disproved. I am now satisfied that the Christian Church of Southern India is extremely ancient, whether it was founded by St. Thomas in person or not, and that its existence may be traced back to the third century with a high degree of probability. Mr. Milne-Rae carried his scepticism too far when he attributed the establishment of the Christian congregations to missionaries from the banks of the Tigris in the fifth or sixth century.” (*Early History of India*, 1924, p. 250.)

“My personal impression, formed after much examination of the evidence, is that the story of the martyrdom in Southern India is the better supported of the two versions of the saint’s death.” (*Oxford History of India*, 1923, p. 126.)

The bias that has led some of our authorities to confine St. Thomas’s labours to the north can further be seen from some absurd and unwarranted inferences drawn by them. Dr. Fleet, for instance, apparently under the influence of the Mazdai-Vasudeva theory, is disposed to confine St. Thomas’s labours to the north. He premises his investigation by stating that, “whereas the Christian tradition represents St. Thomas the Apostle as the missionary to India and Parthia, by the term ‘India’ we are not necessarily to understand simply the country which we now call India. As used by ancient writers, the term denoted the whole of the south-eastern part of Asia, on the south of the Himalaya Mountains, and on the east of a line running from about the centre of the Hindu Kush down along or close on the west of the Sulaiman Range to strike the coast of the Arabian Sea on the west of the mouths of the Indus. It thus included our India, with Burma, Siam, Cochin China, the Malay Peninsula, and the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and with also that portion

of Afghanistan which lies between Kabul and Peshawar.” And yet, in spite of the evidence before him, he adds: “And the ‘India’ which is mentioned in the fuller tradition may easily have been a territory of which the principal components lay in Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and which embraced in our India only the Punjab strictly so called and the western parts of Sindh.” We noted before that, for the same reason, it was not surprising to find Dr. Fleet making the statement that “there is no evidence at all that the place where St. Thomas was martyred was anywhere in Southern India.” He further asserts that “any statement to that effect cannot be traced back beyond the middle ages; and all the real indications point in quite another direction.”

Now, if we turn to the quotations we have already given on pages 40 and 41 from the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, which Dr. Fleet himself refers to and places in the second century, we shall see that it more than confirms the statement made in the *Acts of St. Thomas* that he preached “throughout all India,” since from the second portion of the extracts given it clearly appears that “India and all its own countries, and those bordering on it, even to the farthest sea, received the Apostles’ Hand of Priesthood from

Judas Thomas, who was Guide and Ruler in the church which he built there and ministered there," so that Southern India cannot well be excluded from the range of the Apostles' field of labours.

Referring to the original translation by Cureton of the *Ancient Syriac Documents* edited and published by Wright of the British Museum in 1864, from which the quotations are taken, we find that the second portion reproduced above is one among other similar statements made in connection with other Apostles, where the several countries evangelized by each of them are enumerated in addition to the places specially associated with their names in the first portion of the extracts given on page 40. The whole account shows the wide range of the field of labour in each case, some of them even overlapping. This being so, it is difficult to imagine how any one can limit the range of St. Thomas' preaching to Northern India alone.

At the same time, it is apparent that Mr. Philipps himself felt the importance of the evidence we have in the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, as he says, it "would be more important if we could fix its date." While admitting that, "from expressions used in it, it is thought to be of the second century", he adds, but Lipsius says

“towards the end of the fourth century, which would bring it to the time of St. Ephraem.” Accordingly, he remarks, “apart from this Syriac *Doctrine of the Apostles*” (and we should add, apart also from the *Acts of St. Thomas*, which Burkitt and Harnack place in the beginning of the third century) “there does not seem to be any mention of ‘India’ in connection with St. Thomas till we get to St. Ephraem (378) and St. Gregory of Nanzienzan (389)” ; and he argues that the early evidence then is that St. Thomas evangelized Parthia.

But referring again to Dr. Wright’s edition of the *Ancient Syriac Documents* and Cureton’s Translation, we find from a note on pages 171-172 against the words, *After the death of the Apostles there were Guides and Rulers in the Church*, that “it would appear from this passage that this treatise must have been written anterior to the time when the title of Bishop, as especially appropriated to those who succeeded to the apostolic office, had generally obtained in the East.” Turning then to the note on page 161 against the words, *Guide and Ruler*, we find it stated that “it is plain from the context here, as well as wherever it occurs in these early Syriac documents, that this title is precisely the same as that of Bishop;

although the Greek word for it had not yet obtained in the East. The first mention that we find of the title *Bishop* is in the *Acts of Sharbil*, page 65, about A.D. 105-112, where Barsamya is called the *Bishop of the Christians*, although more generally designated as here." From this, then, it appears that Dr. Cureton would date the document at least early in the second century.

The date arrived at by Dr. Cureton would further seem to be confirmed by the statement printed in italics in the following extract from the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, where after enumerating the several countries evangelized by the Apostles named there (James, Mark, Judas Thomas, Simon Cephas, John the Evangelist, Andrew, Luke, and Addæus, one of the "seventy-two Apostles," and Aggæus, the disciple of Addæus), the writer goes on to say: "But the rest of the other fellows of the Apostles went to the distant countries of the Barbarians, and taught from place to place, and passed on, and there they ministered with their preaching; there also was their departure out of this world, *while their disciples after them continued to go on up to the present day*. And there was no change or addition made by them to what they preached."

This, then, read with the first portion of the extracts quoted earlier, clearly leaves the impression that the *Doctrine of the Apostles* was written when the disciples of the Apostles or at least when their disciples again were still alive ; and this must have been about the close of the first century or early in the second century.

Dr. Medlycott, by some inadvertence much to his disadvantage, while dealing with the date of the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, quotes ¹ the wrong note (page 147) from the same volume of the *Ancient Syriac Documents*, which refers to the *Doctrine of Addæus the Apostle*, as having been written not later than the beginning of the fifth century. And so he argues on different data that the *Doctrine of the Apostles* must be of much earlier date. However, Mr. Philipps apparently saw himself that the *Doctrine of the Apostles* was of very ancient date ; for, after dealing with the *Acts of St. Thomas*, he goes on to refer to the other writers of the early centuries, and he enumerates them placing the author of the former Syriac work first on the list, adding the words “perhaps second century” ; and he quotes from this document first. Dr. Fleet also evidently saw no reason to dispute this date.

¹ *India and the Apostle Thomas*, p. 84.

Here, then, we have the authors of *the Doctrine of the Apostles* and of *the Acts of St. Thomas*, belonging to the second and third centuries, respectively, not only attesting to St. Thomas's connection with India, but also to the fact that he preached throughout the country and established himself there, by making himself Guide and Ruler of the church which he built there and ministered there; and if the writer of *the Clementine Recognitions* and Origen, both of the third century, state that St. Thomas evangelized Parthia, the testimony of the latter, coming, as Mr. Philipps himself says, "through the medium of Eusebius," whom he quotes and who belongs to a later century, surely there is nothing here to justify Mr. Philipps' conclusion that St. Thomas was really "the Apostle of the Parthian Empire," and "in some limited sense," the Apostle of India, that is, "probably of an 'India' which included the Indus valley, but nothing to the east or south of it." On the contrary, the whole evidence distinctly supports the Ecclesiastical tradition as preserved in the Roman Breviary and the Roman Martyrology, that St. Thomas, after preaching the Gospel in Parthia, Media, Persia, Hyrcania, and Bactria, and leaving, as we might expect, Guides and Rulers, as they were then called, to continue his mission in those

countries, finally betook himself to India, where, as the *Doctrine of the Apostles* says, "he was Guide and Ruler in the Church which he built there and ministered there,"—thus confirming the belief that St. Thomas was really the Apostle of India, where he established his diocese and ended his days (see also pages 120 and 130).

In the face of such evidence how indeed can we exclude Southern India from the scope of St. Thomas's labours and confine him to the north as these authorities have been disposed to do? And what further evidence do we want to establish the very possible connection of St. Thomas with Southern India, when according to Dr. Fleet himself the term "India" as used by ancient writers included so wide a tract as he has described?

However, as if to lend support to the evidence just referred to for the South-Indian apostolate of St. Thomas, we find it related in the *Acts* that the General, who heard of St. Thomas preaching "throughout all India," came to him in a cart drawn "by cattle"; and Dr. Medlycott points out how travelling in a bullock-cart is characteristic of Southern India, whereas if the incident occurred in the north, the horse would have been introduced on the scene and the General would have been mounted on a steed. Gondophares, for instance, is figured on his coins riding a horse, not seated

in a cart drawn by oxen. Further, the fact of Mygdonia using the *palki* or *palanquin* when going to see the Apostle is also specially peculiar to Southern India. Other incidents which strengthen the local colouring given besides those mentioned are also noticed by Dr. Medlycott. The incidents which do not appear to be peculiar to Southern India mentioned by Mr. Philipps are relatively unimportant. In fact Mr. Philipps himself says : “we cannot lay any particular stress upon them in any direction.” The objection raised by some critics that certain ‘customs’ described in the *Acts of St. Thomas* can be shown to be also Biblical and Hebrew, is not to the point, as the comparison made is between the customs peculiar to Southern India and those that prevail in the north.

Further corroborative evidence of a very important nature we find in the testimony of St. Ephraem, A.D. 300 to 373, whose hymns embody the local traditions extant at the time in Edessa. That there was such a tradition then connecting St. Thomas with India, whence his relics were brought to Edessa is not disputed. The actual place of his martyrdom and burial in India is not mentioned by St. Ephraem ; but in one of his hymns written in praise of St. Thomas, he says : “A land of people dark fell to thy lot that

these in white robes thou shouldst clothe and cleanse by baptism"; and in another stanza, "the sunburnt thou hast made fair." At the same time he blesses the merchant who brought so great a treasure as the relics to Edessa, which city in turn he blesses for acquiring and being worthy of possessing this priceless gem, the greatest pearl India could yield. Now, if St. Ephraem believed the relics came from Afghanistan or the north-west corner of India included in the Apostle's time in Gondophares's Kingdom, how could he describe their people as dark or sunburnt, seeing that those regions are more or less in the same latitude as Edessa. The inference, therefore, obviously is that the tradition current in St. Ephraem's time was, that St. Thomas preached mainly in Southern India and was martyred and buried there.

It is well here to consider one objection that some critics have raised in this connection. While arguing from the incidents related in the *Acts*, they assume, as if it were there so stated, that the General of King Mazdai came to St. Thomas in a chariot drawn by cattle *while he was still in King Gondophare's kingdom* and took him to King Mazdai's country in the same chariot. On this assumption they find it difficult to believe that St. Thomas could have travelled in this manner

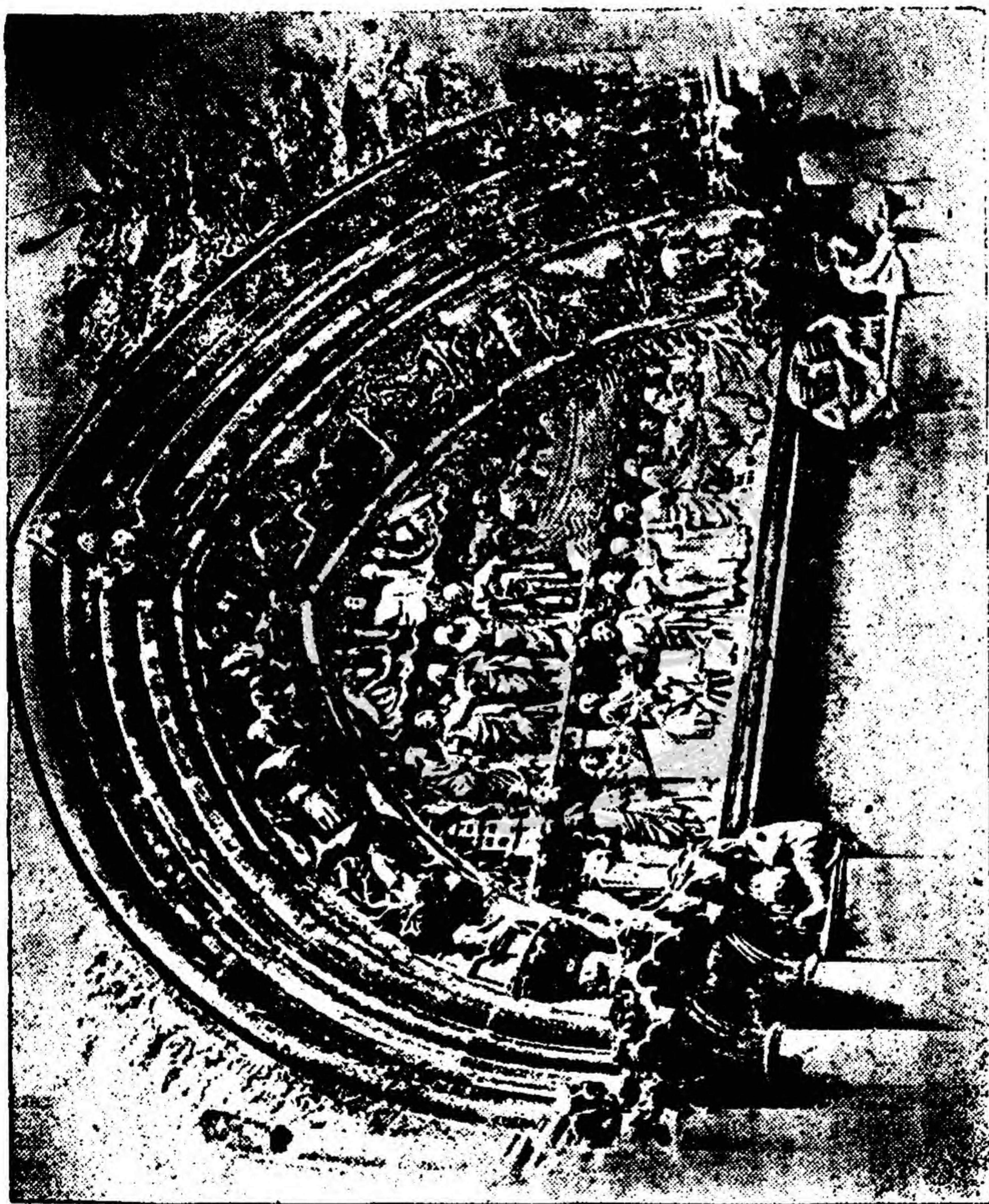
from the north of India to the south, and have consequently endeavoured to locate Mazdai's Kingdom, as Mr. Philipps has done, somewhere nearer, also in the north; while Dr. Farquhar, who supports the South-Indian tradition, thinks that the narrative here is fiction, and says that St. Thomas must have travelled down by sea to the south of India. They have lost sight of the fact that the *Acts* say that the General having heard of St. Thomas preaching "throughout all India" came to him in a chariot drawn by cattle and took him with him to attend to his wife and daughter. This is related in the seventh *Act* (see page 52) where the General speaks of St. Thomas as "a great man throughout all India." There is nothing here to indicate a long journey, nor is it stated where the Saint was at the time. But the words quoted above, "throughout all India," evidently implies, as remarked by Mr. Philipps, an interval of years between the sixth and seventh *Acts*. St. Thomas must have been then on the move in different parts of India. This solves the difficulty, as St. Thomas was very likely in the south, having come there easily by sea, and while there he was taken by the General by one of the many overland routes to his place on the Coromandel Coast. This incident, therefore, need not be fiction.

III. DR. MEDLYCOTT ON THE SUBJECT.

We may now follow the general outline of Dr. Medlycott's work. We need not, as we have already said, accept all his conclusions ; but as his book is undoubtedly a mine of information from which subsequent writers have drawn largely, it is interesting to take a brief survey of it and see how far we can agree with him and where we must differ from him.

We may note in passing that, of the different forms of the name of the Indian King found in the *Acts of St. Thomas*, the coins and the Takht-i-Bahi inscription, Mr. Fleet uses the form 'Gondophernes' generally, and cites other forms only when literal quotation is necessary, while Dr. Medlycott prefers to use the form 'Gondophares.' In any case it is not of much moment which form is used.

The Acts of St. Thomas, already referred to, Dr. Medlycott says, form part of a class of writings known as the "Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles" ; that these writings have of late claimed the attention of several scholars both in England and in



PORTAL OF THE CHURCH OF "NOTRE DAME," SEMUR, COTE D'OR, FRANCE.



Germany ; that although the Acts have come down to us with interpolations intended to support the gnostic heresies which prevailed in the early days of Christianity, the discoveries made in recent years have made it possible to test the statements contained in them in the light of actual history. An elaborate appendix to his book has been devoted to a 'critical analysis' of these Acts, the author's purpose being to show that the principal events narrated in them are based upon historical reality.

Here we may remark that Dr. Medlycott rejects the idea that the Acts are pure romance, like a large portion of the present day literature. But they need not be pure romance, since many a work of fiction, as we know, has for its foundation certain historical facts, and is written with a purpose. He thinks that the original must have been a much shorter composition, and endeavours to prove that it was a genuine work intended to narrate the acts of the Apostle, but that the existing versions, especially the Syriac, have been largely interpolated by the Gnostics to disseminate their errors. At the same time Dr. Medlycott bows to Dr. Burkitt's judgment, who treats the book as a work Syriac in origin and not a translation from the Greek (*Early Eastern Christianity*,

1904, p. 204). Dr. Burkitt also says that the Syriac origin of the *Acts of Thomas* is now maintained by nearly every Syriac scholar (p. 205). Earlier in the work (p. 194) he says that it is only lately that it has been recovered in approximately its original form, and it is only lately that it has been recognized as a story which is Syriac in origin. We need not, therefore, support Dr. Medlycott in his view here. On the other hand much is explained if we regard it, as some scholars have done, as a novel written with a purpose and having an historical basis.

However, Dr. Medlycott begins his work by a thorough investigation of the evidence furnished by the coins and the inscription we have referred to as confirming the first portion of the tradition recited in the Acts connecting the Apostle with King Gondophares. He then proceeds to a close examination of all the available records supplied by the East and West. To collect and bring these together naturally involved long and patient research. The testimonies of St. Ephraem and other Syrian writers, of the Liturgical books and Calendars of the Syrian Church, of the Fathers of the Western Church, of the Calendars, Sacramentaries and Martyrologies of the same Church, and the witness of the Greek and Abyssinian Churches are all laid

under contribution and fully discussed. The evidence, much of which is additional to that cited by Mr. Philipps and Dr. Fleet, all go to confirm the truth of the tradition that St. Thomas did suffer martyrdom in *India*, that is India as we know it now. It follows then, as remarked by Dr. Medlycott, that his tomb, if at all, ought to be found in India. A long chain of witnesses extending from the sixth century to the landing of the Portuguese on the shores of India is accordingly produced, attesting to the constant tradition of the Church that the tomb was really at Mylapore. And yet the fact that the tomb of St. Thomas must naturally be found within the limits of India proper, which in itself, as Dr. Medlycott remarks, is an historical aphorism, has met with the strongest opposition ever since the Portuguese announced the discovery of his tomb at Mylapore. This opposition, the learned author adds, came first and chiefly from quarters which must cause an impartial historian, who patiently investigates the whole history of the case, to consider the same as being rather the outcome of *odium theologicum*, than the result of insufficient historical evidence. A plausible excuse for the general feeling of scepticism created by these writers was, in part, Dr. Medlycott thinks,

offered by the want of previous historical knowledge shown by the Portuguese authorities and writers in India who claimed to have discovered the body, or the entire remains of the Apostle, coupled with other uncritical details ; and once the opposite view arising at first from the doubt regarding the tomb, was taken up and ruthlessly exploited, it was extended to the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostle within the geographical limits of India itself and a widely extending prejudice was formed. It is only in more recent times, when men, indifferent to that *odium*, or guided by their familiarity with, or their long researches in India, approached the subject, that they came gradually to admit the Apostle's mission to India, and to consider the strong historical claim of Mylapore to be the possible site of his martyrdom and burial as not unfounded.

Dr. W. J. Richards, who for thirty-five years was a C.M.S. Missionary in Travancore and Cochin, and who collected fresh evidence in support of the tradition, in his book *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas* (London 1908), endorses this view, and writes : "Dr. Medlycott says, with a certain amount of truth that it is the *odium theologicum* which has made many writers so ready to doubt the Church traditions assigning

Southern India as the missionfield of the Apostle Thomas, and to contradict also the beliefs of the Syrian Christians of Malabar that they themselves are the descendants of the first converts there.”

Accordingly after setting forth the available evidence for the Indian Apostolate, Dr. Medlycott brings forward such evidence as upholds for Mylapore the claim to the tomb. St. Gregory, Bishop of Tours, in his “*In gloria Martyrum*,” a work which he revised in 590, shortly before his death, recording the testimony of one Theodore who visited the tomb in India, writes :—“Thomas the Apostle, according to the narrative of his martyrdom, is stated to have suffered in India. His holy remains (*corpus*), after a long interval of time, were removed to the city of Edessa in Syria and there interred. In that part of India where they first rested stand a monastery and a church of striking dimensions, elaborately adorned and designed. This, Theodore, who had been to the place, narrated to us.” Dr. Medlycott points out that the evidence here clearly implies the existence of a narrative or acts of the martyrdom of the Apostle which declares that he suffered martyrdom in India, the existence of the first tomb of the Apostle, a church of large dimensions covering the Indian tomb, a monastery adjacent,

the monks of which no doubt conducted the services at the shrine, the further knowledge that after the remains of the Apostle had remained buried in India for a time they were thence removed to Edessa, and finally that they were buried anew at Edessa. As Dr. Medlycott remarks, these facts embrace all and even more than is necessary to establish the fact of the early knowledge of the existence of the Indian tomb of the Apostle, while they are confirmed by later evidences.

The record of the next visit to the tomb in India is found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, where King Alfred is reported to have sent in 883 an embassy to Rome and also to St. Thomas in India, in fulfilment of a vow made at the time he was besieged by the heathen Danes. Eminent modern writers of English history are quoted as recording the incident as an ascertained fact of history and not as legend. It is further supported by the early chroniclers, whose works have come down to us. Marco Polo and Friar John of Monte Corvino appear to have both visited the tomb about the same time in 1292 or 1293 and their testimonies are brought forward. Although the name of the town is not mentioned by the witnesses referred to, there seems no reason to doubt that the little town, where the body lay, was

Mylapore, which alone, in all India, has all along claimed to possess the original tomb of the Apostle.

The further witnesses brought forward are the Blessed Oderic of Pordenone (1324-1325), Bishop John de Marignolli (1349), Nicolo de Conti (1425-1430), Amr', son of Mathew, a Nestorian writer (1340) and certain Nestorian bishops, who writing in (1504) to the *Catholicus* of the East, speak of "the houses of St. Thomas in a city on the sea named Meliapur." This brings the record of the Indian Shrine of the Apostle down to the arrival of the Portuguese in India, and shows that the tradition was by no means invented by them; that it was not only locally believed in, but that it was known and testified to from the sixth century onwards by travellers from the West.

Dr. Medlycott then goes into further historical and traditional evidence regarding the Apostle, attesting to the fact that his remains were at a very early period removed from India to Edessa; that during the life-time of St. Ephraem there existed a church at that place named after the Apostle, holding the relics, of which St. Ephraem speaks in the hymns quoted in an earlier chapter by Dr. Medlycott; that some

years later another and a larger church in the same city was completed in honour of the Apostle described as the 'Great Church,' or the 'Basilica'; and that to this church the relics were removed with great pomp and ceremony. Dr. Medlycott shows how some writers have confused the second removal of the relics with the first, also the new church with the older one, and in consequence have made out that the translation of the relics from India took place at a later date; whereas the second church was completed after St. Ephraem's death which occurred in June 373, and the second removal of the relics took place in the year 394. The evidence adduced goes further to show that the relics of St. Thomas remained at Edessa until the city was sacked and destroyed by the rising Moslem power, and that some of the surviving Christian inhabitants recovered the relics of the Apostle from the ruins of the church and transferred them for safety to an island off the coast of Asia Minor, that of Chios in the Ægean Sea. The stone, which covered the remains there and bore the name of the Apostle and bust engraved and is now in the Cathedral of Ortona, attests to the genuineness of the relics. From Chios the relics were removed to Ortona in 1258. While at Ortona, the relics underwent another vicissitude. The Turks sacked the town in 1566



SLAB OF CHALCEDONY WHICH COVERED THE APOSTLE'S RELICS AT CHIOS, NOW IN THE
CATHEDRAL AT ORTONA, ITALY, SHOWING FIGURE BUST AND GREEK INSCRIPTION,
viz., "AGIOS THOMAS," SAINT THOMAS.







ALTAR OF ST. THOMAS, CATHEDRAL, ORTONA, ITALY, UNDER
WHICH THE APOSTLE'S RELICS REPOSE.

and burnt and destroyed the churches, including that of the Apostle, whose shrine was exploded by gunpowder. Although the stone forming the altar slab was burst and that of chalcedony brought from Chios was fractured by the explosion, the sacred bones of the Apostle with the relics of other saints were most providentially preserved intact. The head of the Apostle, which was first missed, was found upon further search crushed under the weight of a portion of the fractured altar stone. It was reverently picked up and the skull was reconstructed so thoroughly that no part was found missing. The sacred relics now repose in a bronze urn placed beneath a marble altar, and the head of the Apostle is placed in a silver bust and is exposed to public veneration on the celebration of the feast. The slab of chalcedony marble, which was brought over from Chios and was fractured by the Turks is also preserved in the Church.

IV. THE DOUBT ABOUT THE MARTYRDOM.

In an earlier paragraph we noted that Mr. Vincent Smith admitted that his “personal experience, formed after much examination of the evidence, is that the story of the martyrdom in Southern India is the better supported of the two versions of the saint’s death.” At the same time he adds that it is by no means certain that St. Thomas was martyred at all, since an earlier writer, Heracleon, the gnostic, asserts that he ended his days in peace. Heracleon, who wrote in the second century, probably about 170 to 180, belonged to Sicily or Italy. St. Clement of Alexandria in his *Stromat*, commenting on the text of Luke, xii. 11, 12, “And when they shall bring you into the synagogues, and to magistrates and powers, be not solicitous how or what you shall answer, or what you shall say ; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you must say,” says, without questioning his statement as regards St. Thomas, that Heracleon, the most distinguished of the school of Valentinus, writes, “that there is a confession by faith and conduct, and one with the voice. The confession that is made by the voice and before the authorities, is

what the most reckon the holy confession. Not soundly : and hypocrites also can confess with this confession. But neither will this utterance be found to be spoken universally ; for all the saved have (not?) confessed with the confession made with the voice and departed. Of whom are Matthew, Philip, Thomas, Levi and many others. And confession with the lips is not universal, but partial.” Mr. Philipps quotes this passage, omitting the bracketted word *not* in the sentence, “for all the saved have not confessed with the voice and departed” ; and hence he naturally says it is not particularly intelligible. It is taken from *The writings of Clement of Alexandria* translated by the Rev. William Wilson, Edinburgh, 1869, Vol. 2, pp. 170 to 171. But Mr. Philipps also remarks that the sense of the passage from Clement of Alexandria is perhaps better given, than by Wilson, in an article on Heracleon by G. Salmon in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, etc., Vol. 2, London, 1880, as follows :—

“Men mistake in thinking that the holy confession is that made by the voice before the magistrates ; there is another confession made in the life and conversation, by faith and works corresponding to the faith. The first confession may be made by a hypocrite, and it is one not required of all ; there are many who have never

been called on to make it, as, for instance, Matthew, Philip, Thomas, Levi (Lebbaeus); the other confession must be made by all.”

From this it is evident that the omission of the word, “not,” in the translation or even in the original, which we have no means of checking, must be a slip of the pen, as the sentence with that word is quite intelligible. Mr. Philipps says that Lipsius attaches importance to it, but that it is not necessary to adopt Lipsius’s ideas, and that his theories were impossible. Dr. Medlycott, referring to Dr. Murdock’s comment that Clement allows the statement to pass unchallenged, and that he takes this as a proof that he had nothing to allege against it, remarks that Heracleon denies the martyrdom not of one but of several of the twelve Apostles; and that it is not a little surprising that in the light of present day ecclesiastical literature, writers are found to appeal to such an authority in opposition to the common belief of Christendom. Besides, as Mr. J. Kennedy in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for October 1906 admits, neither the Western nor the Alexandrian Church was likely to know much of events which had occurred outside the limits of the Roman Empire about the end of the second century. On the other hand the fact of the

martyrdom of the Apostle is testified to by the *Acts of St. Thomas*, and by St. Ephraem (373), St. Ambrose (397), St. Asterius (400), St. Gaudentius (410), St. Gregory of Tours (594), and by later authorities, liturgical books and martyrologies, showing that this has been the constant tradition of the Church.



V. THE MARTYRDOM.

The different versions of the martyrdom of the Apostle are also set forth and examined by Dr. Medlycott. The narrative, according to the Syriac version of the *Acts of St. Thomas*, is that the King (Mazdai) ordered Thomas to be brought up for judgment, and questioned him as to whence he came and who was his master. The King hesitated what sentence he would pass, or rather how he should compass his death without causing popular excitement, "because he was afraid of the great multitude that was there, for many believed in our Lord and even some of the nobles." So Mazdai took him out of town to a distance of about half a mile and delivered him to the guard under a prince with the order, "Go up on this mountain and stab him." On arriving at the spot the Apostle asked to be allowed to pray, and this was granted at the request of Vizan, the King's son, one of the two last converts. Arising from his prayer, Thomas bid the soldiers approach and said, "Fulfil the will of him who sent you." "And the soldiers came and struck him all together, and he fell down and died." The Greek version and the Latin *De Miraculis* generally

agree with the Syriac text, but the Latin *Passio* has a different account. In this version the death of the Apostle occurs at a much earlier period, and was occasioned by the king forcing the Apostle to adore the idol in the temple. When at the Apostle's prayer and bidding the idol was destroyed, the priest of the temple, raising a sword transfixed the Apostle, saying, 'I will avenge the insult to my God.' The local version of the martyrdom prevailing on the Coromandel Coast, as given by Marco Polo and Bishop John de Marignolli, is that St. Thomas while praying in the wood was accidentally shot by an arrow aimed at a peacock. Yet another version of the story, as related by Linschoten, is that, owing to the miracle performed by St. Thomas of removing a log of wood which fell into the mouth of the haven of the town of Mylapore and blocked the traffic, whereby many conversions were made, the Brahmins became his great enemies and sought to bring about his death, which in the end they accomplished by persuading some of the people to stab him on his back while praying in the church. The same narrator states that this incident is found painted and set up in many places and churches in India in memory of the event. There are also other local versions as will be seen later on, (pages 119, 143). However, the old Liturgical

Books and Martyrologies of the Nestorian, Latin and Greek Churches, all testify to the fact that the Apostle Thomas won a martyr's crown by being pierced by a lance.

Here Dr. Medlycott takes the opportunity of challenging the statement made by Mr. W. R. Philipps in the *Indian Antiquary* of April 1903, that the learned Orientalist Assemani deemed the Indian relics of St. Thomas a Nestorian fabrication. Dr. Medlycott points out that the statement is misleading, since Assemani in the fourth volume of his learned work, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, Rome, 1728, covers ten folio pages with his proofs in defence of the Indian Apostolate of Thomas, which he establishes on the authority of the Fathers in reply to Besnage's cavillings; and further adduces evidence from the Liturgical Books of the Syrian Churches including the Nestorian section, and of Syrian writers, both in proof of his Apostolate as well as of his martyrdom in India. But the *corpus* or bones, as Assemani points out, having been transferred from India to Edessa, and Syrian, Greek and Latin writers having, from the fourth century, written of the body of Thomas as having been removed 'to Edessa of Mesopotamia,' what Assemani really denies is that the body was found by the





RELIQUARY CONTAINING
FRAGMENT OF A BONE AND
POINT OF LANCE,
SAN THOME CATHEDRAL.



REVERSE OF THE RELIQUARY.

Portuguese in India; and quite rightly, adds Dr. Medlycott, because the Portuguese on arriving in India, unaware of the historical data now available regarding the remains of the Apostle, assumed that the tomb at Mylapore yet held the entire remains. An admission made by Mr. Philipps in the paragraph previous to the one containing the statement challenged, appears however to have escaped Dr. Medlycott's notice. Mr. Philipps says that the constant tradition of the Church seems to have been that the body was taken to Edessa, that St. Ephraem, as quoted by him, seems to imply that part of the body had been left in India; and yet Mr. Philipps, in the following paragraph of his article, makes the unqualified statement that Assemani deemed the Indian *relics* of St. Thomas a Nestorian fabrication, whereas as shown above all that Assemani denied was that the body was found by the Portuguese on their arrival in India; and this certainly does not exclude the belief by Assemani himself in St. Ephraem's statement that portion of the remains of the Apostle was left behind in India. As a fact the authorities at the Cathedral of San Thomé claim to possess only a very small portion of the relics, consisting of a fragment of a bone and the extreme point of a lance.

VI. THE MALABAR TRADITION.

Dr. Medlycott then gives a summary of the tradition universally accepted by the St. Thomas Christians of the West Coast, and found prevailing in India at the arrival of the Portuguese as reported by their early writers; viz., that St. Thomas landed on the Malabar Coast at Kodangular (Cranganore), that seven Churches were established, that the Apostle then passed from Malabar to the Coromandel Coast, where he suffered martyrdom, and that at some subsequent period a violent persecution raged against the Christians on the Coromandel Coast, compelling many of them to take refuge among their brethren on the West Coast, where they settled down.

He quotes Col. Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, as upholding the Malabar tradition that it was at Cranganore the Apostle landed and first preached there. St. Francis Xavier is also quoted in support of the existence of the belief among the Christians of Socotra at the time of his visit to that Island, that St. Thomas landed on the Malabar Coast and that they themselves were the descendants of the converts made by the Apostle.

Theophilus, the missionary sent by Constantius about the year 354 A.D., is said to have gone, in the course of his missionary journey, from the Maldives to "other parts of India and reformed many things which were not rightly done among them" (see p. 151). Dr. Medlycott argues that Malabar, which is but a short sail from the Maldives must have been included in the "other parts of India" referred to. Mr. Vincent Smith supports Dr. Medlycott in his contention, in his *Early History of India*, 1924, Appendix M., where he remarks "Dr. Medlycott is, I think, right in holding that Theophilus visited Malabar and found Christians in that region." He also says that "the historical traditions of India and Ceylon when read together seem to carry the evidence for the existence of the Church in Malabar to the third century." And apart from the Ceylon tradition, he says: "I see no reason for hesitating to believe the Indian tradition that Manikka Vasagar visited Malabar and reconverted two families of Christians to Hinduism. The descendants of those families, who are still known as Manigramakars, are not admitted to full privileges as caste Hindus. Some traditions place the reconversion as having occurred about A.D. 270. If that date be at all nearly correct, the Malabar Church must be considerably older. So far as I can appreciate the

value of the arguments from the history of Tamil literature, there seems to be good independent reasons for believing that Manikka Vasagar may have lived in the third century. Some authors even place him about the beginning of the second century. If he really lived so early his relation with the Church in Malabar would confirm the belief in its Apostolic origin.”







ANCIENT STONE IMAGE OF ST. THOMAS' AT MYLAPORE.

VII. CALAMINA.

As regards the name *Calamina*, which is mentioned in some of the writings as the place in India where the Apostle Thomas was martyred, there has been much speculation. Dr. Medlycott refers specially to the article by Mr. Philipps, which we have already alluded to, because, as he says, vague hints are thrown out and 'speculation' indulged in to the effect that 'Carmana', our modern Karman in Southern Persia, might represent Calamina. Mr. Philipps held that 'from a geographical, an ethnical, and indeed as it seems to me, from every point of view', the site of the Apostle's tomb ought to be looked for in that quarter rather than in Southern India. Dr. Medlycott, on the other hand, contends that Calamina never had a geographical existence, that the name does not appear in any of the older writings treating of the Apostle, while where it is mentioned, it is added that it is situated in India. India, then, and Southern India we should say, considering the evidence we have already adduced, is the country where we should look for the tomb of St. Thomas. What place is there in India, asks Dr. Medlycott, other than Mylapore, which has ever set forth a claim to it? Decidedly none :

in no other part of India, nor elsewhere, has such a claim been raised—that of Edessa was for a second tomb where the sacred remains rested after removal from India. Why, then, should there be any objection to its being placed in Southern India, and topographically at Mylapore, especially as Mr. Philipps himself admits, “there is nothing inherently improbable in such a supposition”? As to ‘Carmana’ or Carmania of old, now Karman, Dr. Medlycott further points out that the Nestorians who had churches, priests and Christians in that part of Persia down to past the middle of the seventh century, must certainly have known if at any time it held the Apostle’s tomb; that a claim so much nearer home would not have been overlooked by them; and they certainly would not have come to India to search for it. Quotations are given from a letter of the Nestorian patriarch, Jesuab, A.D. 650—660, addressed to Simeon, Bishop of Ravardshir, the Metropolitan of Persia at the time, in support of his statement, and which show how groundless the suggestion put forward by Mr. Philipps is. Dr. Medlycott however remarks: “We owe it in fairness to the writer of the paper to add that having received from us a copy of the above passages, he reproduced them by way of rectification in a Note published in the *Indian*

Antiquary, 1904, page 31, under the heading *Miscellanea*. This phase of the question may now be considered closed.”

Gutschmid, again, held the view that Calamina must be identified with Calama on the seaboard of Gedrosa, pointing out that Calama was in the time of the Apostle, under the sceptre of Gandopheres. On the face of it this view is quite untenable as the Apostle was put to death under the orders of quite another King named Mazdai, and the place of his martyrdom must have been under the sceptre of the latter and not of the former.

Dr. Medlycott himself goes further into the subject. He observes that the name does not appear in any of the older authentic writings treating of the Apostle. It appears first in a group of mostly anonymous writings in Greek, which give a brief summary of the doings, preachings and deaths of the Apostles. From this class of writings to which scholars have not been able to assign a date, the supposed authors, Sophronius, a friend of St. Jerome, Hippolytus, Dorotheus and another are quoted as mentioning *Calamina in India* as the place of St. Thomas's martyrdom. From these writings again the name appears to have been taken up by some Syrian writers, and to have made its way into the later Martyrologies.

Some scholars have tried to discredit the authority of these anonymous writings ; but where is the object of discrediting them if at the same time attempts are made to identify Calamina with some place outside India. It is a significant fact that no tradition of any kind has been traced as having existed at any time in Northern India, Afghanistan, Beluchistan, Persia or Arabia, connecting the martyrdom and burial of the Apostle with any place in those regions.

Dr. Medlycott is inclined to regard the name Calamina, as fictitious, and ventures on a suggestion as to how it did get connected with the Apostle in the minds of the writers referred to, as the place of his martyrdom in India. Dr. Medlycott thinks that Calamina is probably a compound of the word *Kalah*, the name of a port, the existence of which in the vicinity of India is historically beyond a doubt, and *elmina* which in Syriac denotes a port.

There is again the suggestion in *Hobson Jobson* by Col. Yule and Dr. Burnell, that the name is in fact *Choramandalam*, the Realm of *Chora*, this being the Tamil form of the very ancient title of the Tamil Kings who reigned at Tanjore. The name also occurs in the forms *Cholamandalam* or *Solamandalam* on the great

Temple inscription of Tanjore (11th century) and in an inscription of A.D. 1101 at a temple dedicated to Varahaswami near Seven Pagodas. Dr. Macleane, in the *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency*, suggests that *Calamina* may be a corruption from Coromandel. This is the name of a small village on the coast north of Madras, which has come to be applied to the Eastern Coast of the Peninsula of India. It is not unlikely that *Calamina*, as mentioned by the old writers, was originally meant for the coast on which the town where the Apostle was martyred was situated.

There is still another suggestion based on a local tradition which the fishing folk in the place have preserved. It is stated when the Portuguese arrived at Mylapore in search of St. Thomas' tomb, their ship was approached by a number of fishermen in their catamarans filled with a species of fish which was plentiful at that season. The Portuguese made signs inquiring what this place was, and the fishermen thinking they wanted to know the name of the fish with them, replied *Cala meen*. The Portuguese who had learnt from tradition that the place where the Apostle was martyred was so called, exclaimed, "Yes, yes, that is what we want." It is probable that the

early travellers met with the same experience and mistook the name called out by the fishermen for the name of the place, and recorded it as such in the accounts of their travels, *Cala meen* becoming easily *Calamina* in Latin and its allied languages.

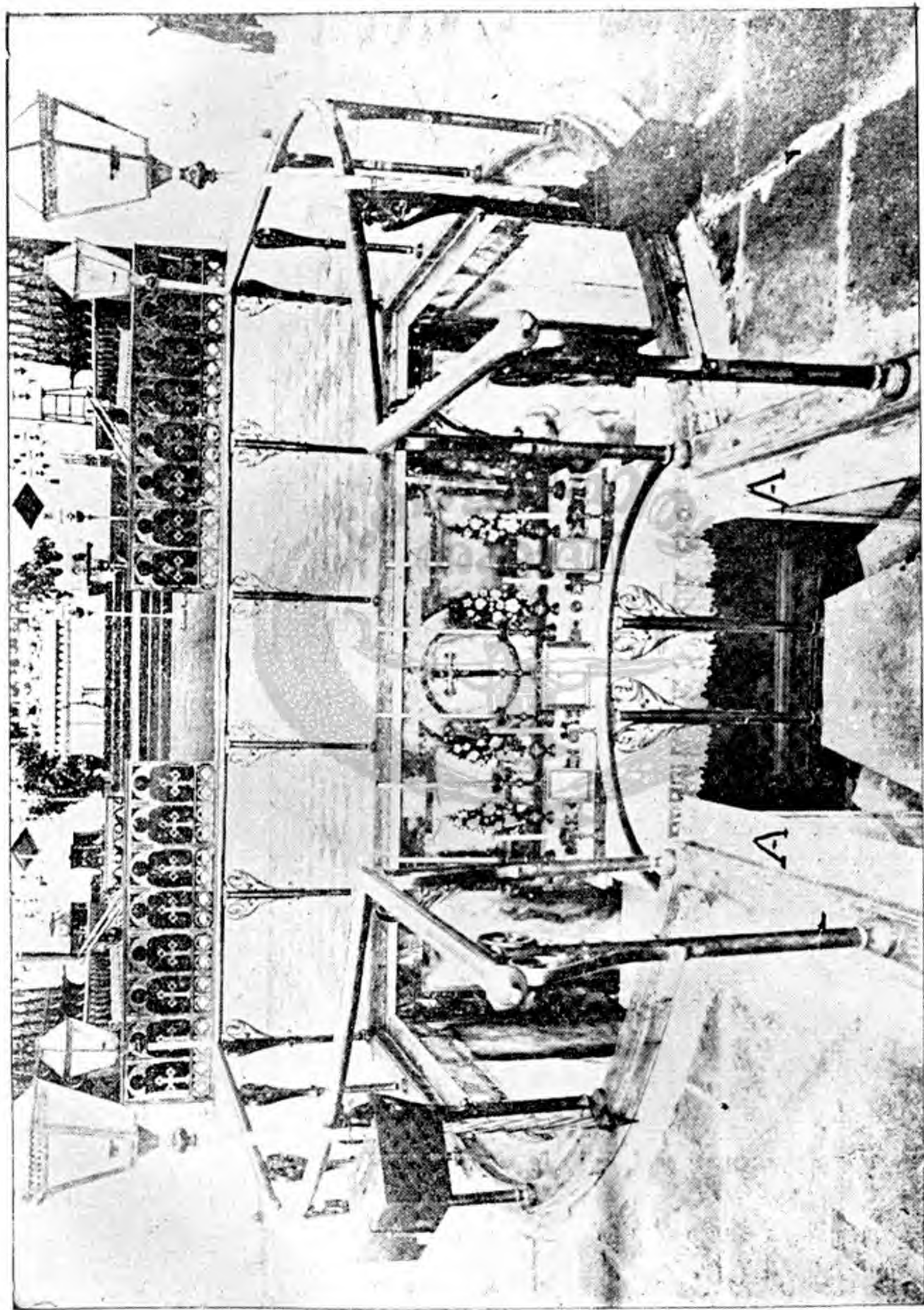
The suggestion, however, put forward in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. xiii, page 382, by the late Rev. James Doyle, who was for sometime Editor of the *Catholic Register*, the organ of the diocese of San Thomé, is much to the point. He finds it far more reasonable to believe that *Calamina* was an ancient town at the foot of the hill, St. Thomas' Mount, that has wholly disappeared, as many more recent historic Indian cities have done. If it is remembered that the tradition, according to the *Acts of St. Thomas* and as handed down by the Christians of the Coromandel and the West Coast, is that St. Thomas was martyred on a hill outside the town and was buried in the town, we need not try to identify *Calamina* (the place of his martyrdom) with Mylapore (the place of his burial), since as suggested by Rev. Doyle, *Calamina* might well have been an ancient village at the foot of the hill, which had disappeared with the vicissitudes of the times and had since revived with the

European settlement under a different name, the English name, St. Thomas Mount, serving to denote both the hill and the town at its base, while the Tamil name, *Peria Malai* (Big Mount) which distinguishes it from *Chinna Malai* (Little Mount) fulfils the same purpose.



VIII. MYLAPORE.

As to *Mylapore*, Dr. Medlycott tries to identify it with Ptolemy's *Manarpha* or *Maliarpha*. Of the different texts examined by the author the latter form preponderates, and Dr. Medlycott argues that the form *Maliarpha* contains the two essential ingredients of the name Maliapur, which would be the form known or reported to the Greek geographers. A Greek desinence, as customary in such cases, has evidently been introduced, so in place of *pur* or *phur* (which may represent a more ancient form of pronunciation) we have the Greek termination *pha*; nor has the sound *r* of the Indian name disappeared, for it has passed to the preceding syllable of the word. He adds that if we take into consideration the inaccurate reproduction of Indian names in Ptolemy's present text, it is almost a surprise that so much of the native sound of the name is yet retained. It must be admitted that the name, Mylapore, is not mentioned by other writers until about the fifteenth century. The fact, however, that the maps illustrating Ptolemy's geography place *Maliarpha* where the present Mylapore would be shown is much in favour of Dr. Medlycott's view. The



THE TOMB OF ST. THOMAS IN THE CATHEDRAL AT SAN THOME. A-A. GRAVE OF ST. THOMAS.



same identification was suggested previously by D'Anville, the French geographer of the eighteenth century (*Geographie Ancienne Abégée*, Paris, 1788); as also by Paulinus à Sto. Bartholomeo, the Carmelite missionary of the West Coast (*India Orientalis Christiana*, Romae, 1794).

Col. Love in his *Vestiges of Old Madras* supports this view, and says that Mylapore is generally considered to be the *Malli-arpha* of Ptolemy, and that the original designation of the Portuguese settlement was San Thomé de Meliapur. Hunter in the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* states that the name *Mylapur* is spelt variously—*Mayilapuram*, or Peacock town; *Malai-puram*, or Mount Town; *Meliapur*, *Mirapur* (by the Portuguese); and *Meelapur* in the *Tohfatal Majohudin*; that it has been suggested that it is the *Malifattan* of Rashid-ud-din, but that more recent inquirers favour the identification of Nega-patam with *Malifattan*. Dr. Maclean in his *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency* gives the derivation of Mylapore from *mayil*, Tamil for peacock, and *pura*, Sanscrit for city, with reference, according to the Brahmins, to the tradition that Parvaty worshipped her husband Shiva in the form of a peacock. According to the local Christian tradition the name would

seem to be similarly derived, but with reference to the story ascribing the death of St. Thomas to an arrow aimed at one of the peacocks which were about him while praying in the wood and testifying to the fact that peacocks were plentiful in the locality then.

Dr. Medlycott lays special stress on the *Malabar* tradition in support of the claim of Mylapore to hold the tomb of the Apostle. He is thoroughly convinced even quite apart from all the evidence previously adduced that if the claim of Mylapore to be the place of the martyrdom and of the burial of the Apostle was not based on undeniable fact, the Christians of Malabar would never have acknowledged their neighbours' claim to hold the tomb of the Apostle, neither would they ever be induced to frequent it by way of pilgrimage. Further had this been a case of fictitious claim put forth to secure public notoriety and importance, they would, Dr. Medlycott adds, as probably have, any way, set up one for themselves and would have certainly ignored the claim of the former.

Mr. J. Kennedy in *The East and the West*, April 1907, admits that a considerable amount of truth underlies the legend of St. Thomas's Apostleship, that the shrine at Mylapore had been

for many centuries in existence when it was visited by Marco Polo, and that the mention of the miraculous log makes it certain that the shrine Theodore visited in the sixth century was Mylapore. But he is wholly sceptical as to the tomb at Mylapore being the real tomb of the Apostle, as he would confine him to Parthia and the Indus valley, losing sight of the evidence brought forward above, which clearly shows that he cannot reasonably do so. Accordingly, he goes to the length of suggesting that "the discovery of the tomb of St. Thomas on the summit of a wooded hill far from the habitations of men and from all other Christian communities, must certainly have been the work of some Christian hermit," since, as he makes out, in the early ages "both in the East and the West the discovery of wonder-working graves was almost entirely the work of these wandering ascetics, (hermits and monks) who played a great part in the diffusion of Eastern Christianity, especially in the wilder districts." Apart from the inaccuracy of the statement that the tomb was discovered on the top of a hill, whereas it is located in a suburb of Madras on a level with it, the assumptions contained in the statement that it was far from the habitations of men and from all other Christian communities, are too glaring to need even notice. "Western

saints, in the centuries immediately succeeding Constantine," he says, "had frequent occasion to expose the claims of so-called martyrs' tombs to superstitious veneration, nor is it less the duty of the modern historian." Just so; and this has been the attitude of the Church all through. But to assert that because in the early ages miracles were related as having occurred in connection with the tombs of saints, and in some cases they have been proved to be spurious, that in this case the discovery of the tomb *must certainly* have been the work of a hermit, is surely not historical criticism. To talk, besides, as he does, of "the worship of wonder-working tombs" and of the veneration of the tomb of St. Thomas at Mylapore as a Christian example of the Pagan cult prevailing throughout India, shows strong anti-Catholic bias. Catholics who venerate the tomb are not compelled to believe in its genuineness; and they know well that it is a question of evidence and that they may be mistaken as to the fact. They regard it, in any case, in the light of a memorial, whereby the saint is remembered and honoured. If miracles are said to have occurred in connection with the reputed tomb or relics, Catholics understand again that here also it is a question of evidence, and that, if genuine, they are the result of faith excited by the memorial of the saint, whose

intercession had been implored by clients for Divine interposition on their behalf.

D'Arsey in his *Portuguese Discoveries. Dependencies and Missions in Asia and Africa*, referring to this tradition, says : "St. Chrysostom writes that from the earliest times of Christianity, the tomb of St. Thomas was, in the East, as much venerated as that of St. Peter at Rome. To this very day, and from time immemorial, the city of Meliapour, to which ¹ the Christians of India have given the name of St. Thomas, sees, every year, the two neighbouring hills covered by a multitude of Christians, old and new, who flock thither from the coasts of Malabar, from Ceylon, from the most distant parts of India, and even from Arabia, to deposit their offerings and to pray at the shrine of the Holy Apostle."

¹ We should say, to the eastern part of which the Portuguese had given the name of San Thomé (St. Thomas).

IX. ST. THOMAS' MOUNT.

This, the traditional scene of the martyrdom of St. Thomas, is familiarly known as "Big Mount", as Mr. J. J. Cotton has noted in his *List of Inscriptions on Tombs or Monuments in Madras*; and we should add, not "Great Mount" or "Great Mount St. Thomas" as some writers affect to call it. As far as our experience of over half a century goes St. Thomas' Mount has always been called "Big Mount", or *Peria Malai* in Tamil, by the residents of Madras to distinguish it from the "Little Mount", or "Chinna Malai" the popular colloquial Tamil equivalent for "Sinna Malai," which is about two miles nearer Madras. In fact it is not *big* enough to be called "Great Mount." Its proper name, *St. Thomas' Mount*, is well known to geographers and historians, and sufficiently locates and identifies the place. It is an isolated cliff of green stone and syenite 300 feet above the level of the sea and about 8 miles south-west of Fort St. George, Madras.

It is also famous for the traditional bleeding cross, which was found by the Portuguese about A.D. 1547 when digging amongst the ruins of



ST. THOMAS' MOUNT.







ANCIENT CROSS AT ST. THOMAS' MOUNT.

former Christian buildings for the foundation of the chapel over whose altar the cross was subsequently fixed. When discovered, spots resembling blood-stains, it is said, were observed on it which reappeared after being scraped away. The cross is sculptured on a granite slab and has an inscription around it. There is a facsimile of it in *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. iv, p. 174. Most scholars are agreed that the characters are Sassanian Pehlevi, "the divine high piping Pehlevi" of Omar Khayyam's nightingale, stanza vi," as Mr. J. J. Cotton in his work quoted above puts it. "It is the old heroic Sanskrit of Persia."

In 1561 a Brahmin gave a dubious version of the inscription which the Portuguese who had no means then of checking the translation accepted in good faith. It is only in recent times that European scholars have thrown some light on it. Dr. A. C. Burnell was the first in 1873 to decipher the inscription.

His translation is as follows :

"In punishment by the cross the suffering of this who is the true Christ, and God above and Guide for ever pure."

Haug, the Munich scholar, translates it : "He who believes in the Messiah and in God on high,

and also in the Holy Ghost, is in the grace of Him who bore the pain of the Cross.”

E. W. West : “(He) whom the suffering of the selfsame Messiah, the forgiving and upraising, (has) saved, (is) offering the plea whose origin was the agony of this.”

J. J. Cotton gives the following transliteration of the inscription and the translation of the same as given by West :

“*Mun hamich Meshikhai avakshayi madam —afra-ich Khar bukhto sur-zay mun bun dardo dena.*”

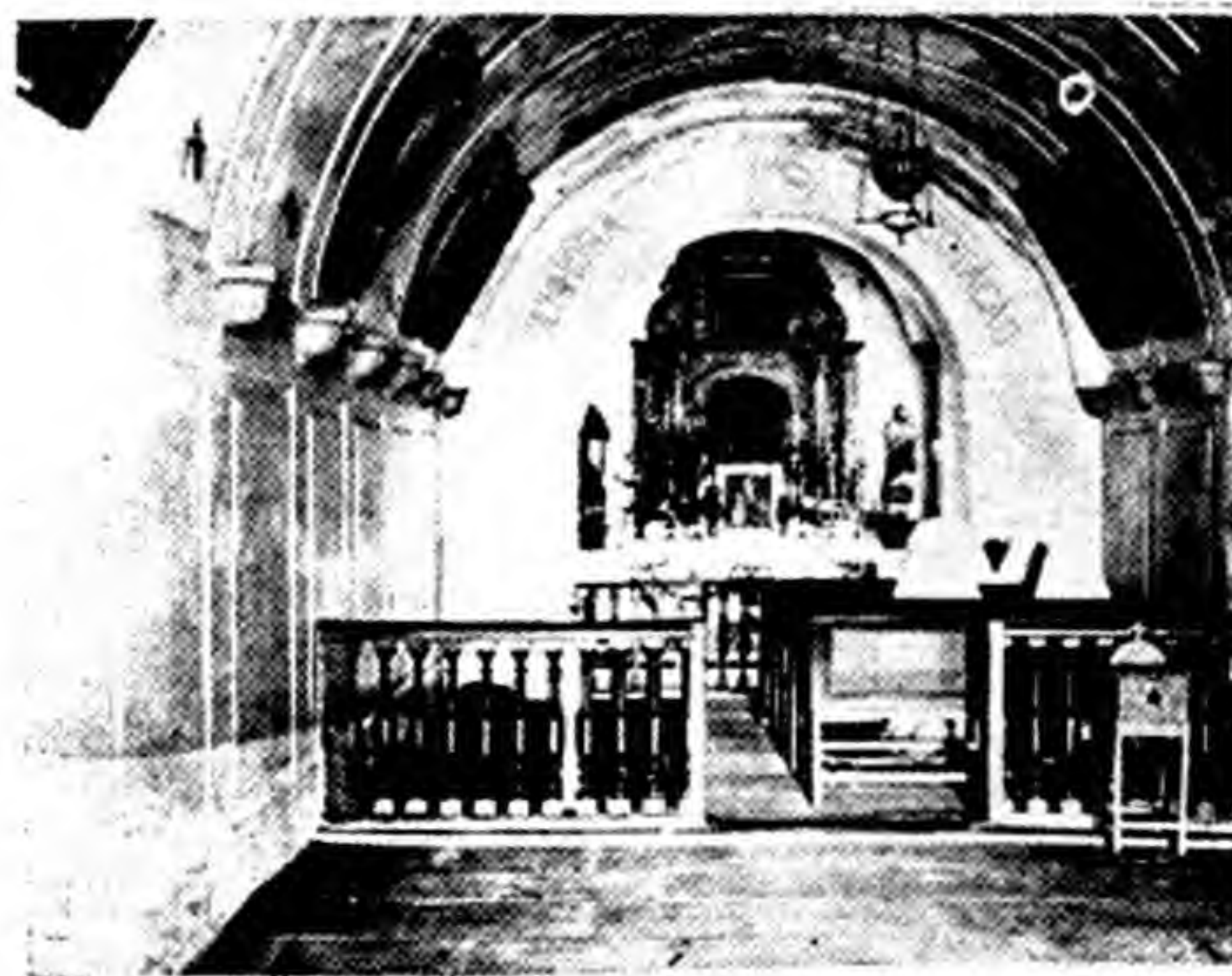
It will be seen that even the European scholars do not agree in their interpretation of the inscription. They variously date it the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th century. Rev. Richards in *the Indian Christians of St. Thomas* makes the remark that “this language (the Pehlevi) owns no inscription in India later than the eighth century.”

Practically the same inscription is found round the two crosses in the Valiyapalli Church at Kottayam in Travancore. The larger cross has at the foot a text in old Syriac from Galatians vi, 14. “But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We learn from a note of Fr. Hosten’s to the English translation of Fr. Vāth’s *St. Thomas, the Apostle of*





ANCIENT PICTURE OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN AT ST. THOMAS' MOUNT
PAINTED ON WOOD.



INTERIOR OF CHURCH ON
ST. THOMAS' MOUNT.

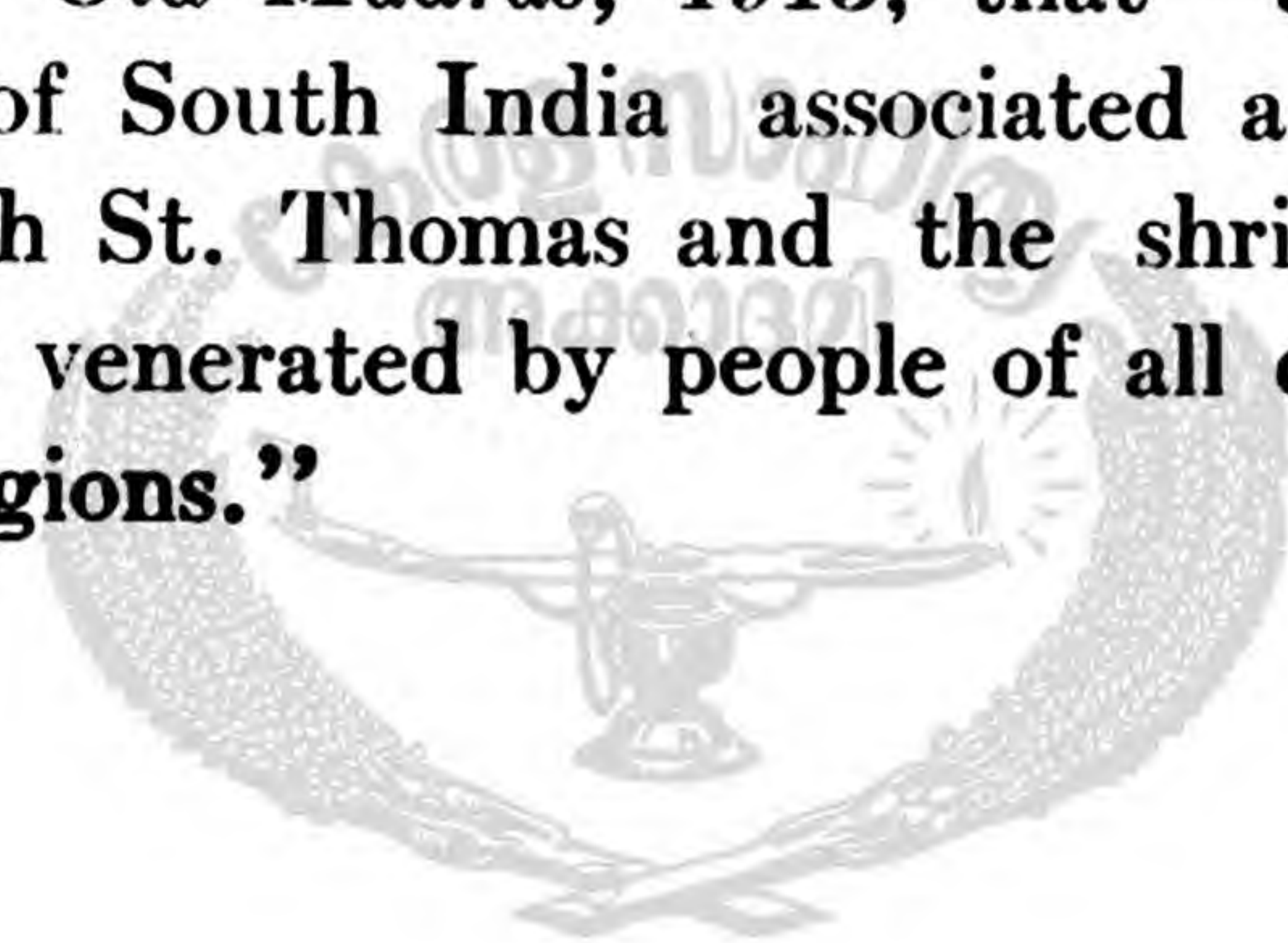
India (see *Supplement* to the *Catholic Register*, February 1928) that a fourth Pahlavi cross was found at Kattamattam in 1921; that at Muttuchira, also in Travancore, there is a fifth cross, with a double line of Pahlavi, the first line being as at Mylapore, and both lines being very badly damaged; and that a sixth cross, part of which, now at Kuvappalli, came from the ruined Christian settlement of Nilakkal, seems to have had an inscription in Roman or Greek capitals, but that it is so illegible that one can only guess. The other portion of this cross left at Nilakkal was not found by Fr. Hosten when he visited the site in 1924.

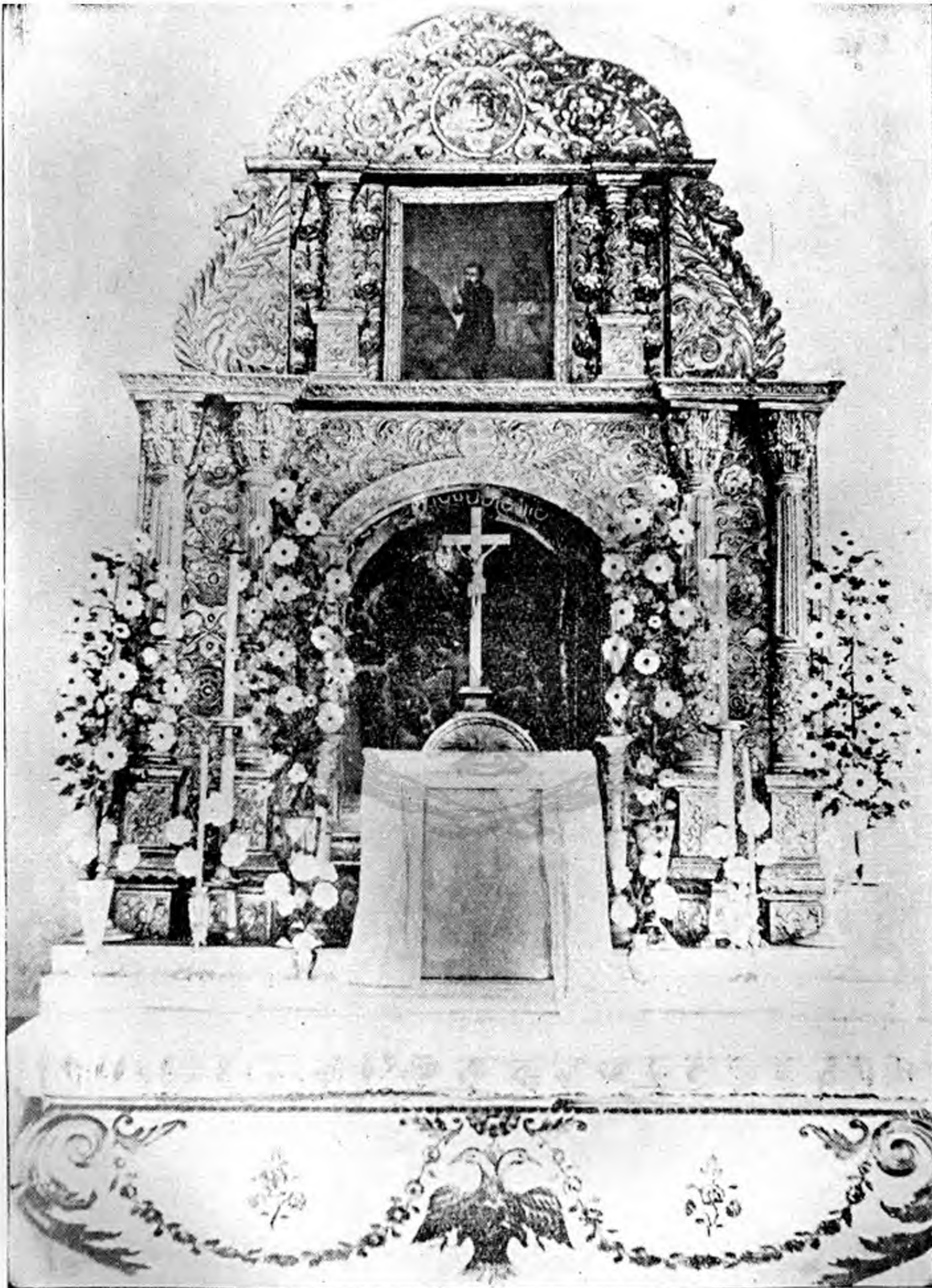
From all this it is evident, that there was already a place of Christian worship in St. Thomas' Mount in the early middle ages and that the Church on the Coromandel Coast was identical with that on the Malabar Coast.

There is also a most impressive representation of the Holy Virgin and Child in this Church which is believed to be one of the seven portraits painted by St. Luke brought by St. Thomas to India. It was rediscovered in about the same place along with the Cross. It is also said that some time ago a local artist was employed to retouch the picture, and was struck blind while

attempting to do so. Another version is that the artist's endeavours to renovate the picture were frustrated as the paint would not adhere to it.

The church itself is dedicated to "Our Lady of Expectation." Correa relates how a beacon fire was lighted nightly on the Mount for the benefit of mariners who no sooner sighted it than they struck their sails and made obeisance; and Colonel Love remarks, in this connection, in his *Vestiges of Old Madras*, 1913, that "the Native Christians of South India associated a hill near Madras with St. Thomas and the shrine of the Mount was venerated by people of all classes and various religions."





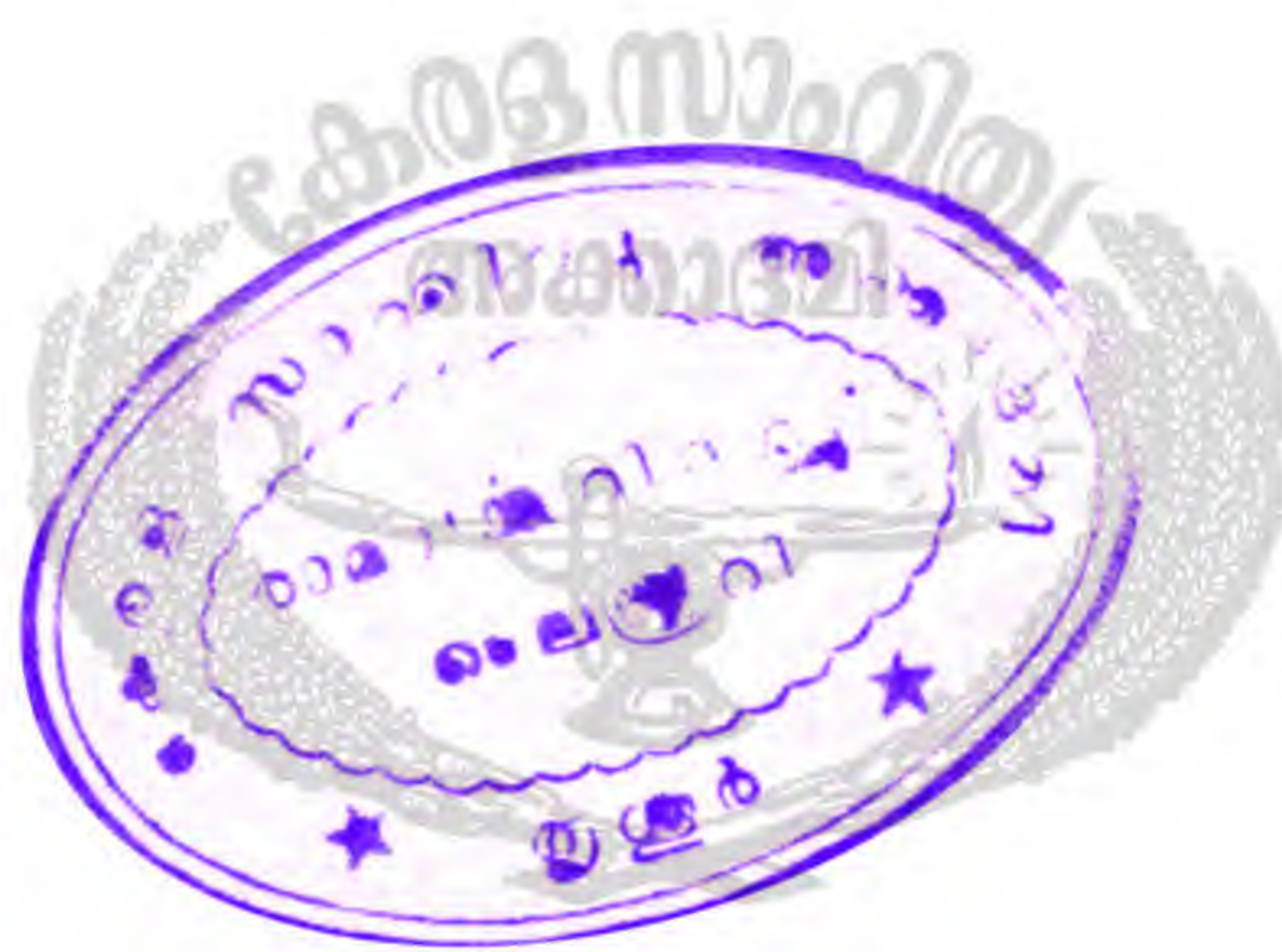
ALTAR OF THE CHURCH ON ST. THOMAS' MOUNT.







THE LITTLE MOUNT CHURCH.





MARBLE ALTAR OF ST. THOMAS IN THE CAVE
AT THE LITTLE MOUNT.





MIRACULOUS SPRING AT THE LITTLE MOUNT.

X. THE LITTLE MOUNT.

The “Little Mount” or “Chinna Malai” is a hillock about two miles away from St. Thomas’ Mount and nearer Madras. It contains a cave to which St. Thomas is said to have fled and sought refuge when pursued by his persecutors, and, when discovered, to have escaped through a hole in it to St. Thomas’ Mount where he was overtaken and speared to death. A beautiful marble altar has been erected in this cave. In 1551 the Portuguese built the present Church of our Lady of Health adjoining the cave, to which one gains access from within the Church. On the west of the Church is a Cross cut in rock before which the Apostle was wont to pray. Near by there is an opening in the rock about five to six feet in depth. It is called the well or fountain of St. Thomas, who is said to have struck the rock at this place, from which gushed forth a spring of clear water, which quenched the thirst of the multitude hearing him preach, and which is believed to have possessed also healing properties.

XI. INDIA OF THE ANCIENTS.

Some critics, losing sight of the evidence we have brought forward, suggest that as some authorities mention Parthia as the country evangelized by St. Thomas, and others India, the term 'India' had a vague signification in ancient times. They fail to see that the Apostle might easily have been connected with both, as is narrated in the tradition preserved in the Roman Breviary and the Roman Martyrology, that he preached not only to the Parthians, but also to the Medes, the Persians, the Hyrcaneans, and the Bactrians and finally betook himself to the Indians, where he ended his days by gaining the crown of martyrdom; and that the mention of his connection with one of these countries by any writer need not necessarily be taken to exclude the others, so as to require a forced explanation of the term "India." Again, in connection with the tradition that St. Thomas was martyred at Calamina in India, attempts have been made to include Persia, Arabia and Ethiopia in the India of the ancients and to locate Calamina somewhere outside India proper. We have noted the description given by Dr. Fleet of the India of the ancients, which

distinctly excludes Persia, Arabia and Ethiopia from the limits of ancient India ; and this is confirmed by an old document like the Bible itself, where a very explicit statement occurs in *Esther* i, 1 regarding Assuerus ¹, who is said to have “reigned from India to Ethiopia over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces,” showing clearly that a wide tract of country lay between India and Ethiopia. This would exclude not only Ethiopia itself from the India of the ancients, but also Persia, which is mentioned in the same book of the Bible as a separate Kingdom (*Esther* xvi, 14), and Arabia which is spoken of in other books as quite a distinct country (3 Kings x, 15 ; Jer. xxv, 24 ; Gal. i, 17 ; iv, 25).

And then we gather from Rawlinson's *Inter-course between India and the Western World from the Earliest Times to the Fall of Rome*, that after the dissensions of the civil war Augustus settled down to organize and regulate his vast possessions ; that the effect of the *Pax Romana* upon trade was very marked. Piracy was put down, trade-routes secured, and the fashionable world of Rome, undistracted by conflict, began to demand, on an unprecedented scale, oriental luxuries of every kind. Silk from China, fine

¹ Ahasuerus in Protestant Bible.

muslins from India, and jewels, especially beryls and pearls, were exported from eastern ports for personal adornment. Drugs, spices and condiments, as well as costus, lycium, and other cosmetics fetched high prices. Even greater was the demand for pepper, which sold in the days of Pliny at the price of 15 denarii a pound. Pliny, who is fond of indulging in trite homilies on Roman extravagance, is right, he says, in complaining of the drain upon Roman finance caused by the Indian trade. India produced very little coinage (and what she did produce was mostly imitated from Greek and Roman coins). The specie received from Europe was absorbed as it is very largely to-day. The huge hoards of coins in the Madras Presidency shew what became of the money. As Rawlinson remarks, Roman coinage was, like English gold, the chief medium—almost the sole medium—of international commerce. Indians had no coinage worth speaking of, and preferred to import specie. This was especially true of the south.

In the reign of Claudius, an epoch-making discovery changed the whole aspect of the sea-borne trade between India and Rome. This was the discovery, about 45 A.D. of the existence of the monsoon-winds, blowing regularly across the

Indian Ocean, by a captain of the name of Hippalus. It shortened the voyage to India considerably. Striking due east from Cape Gardafui, for instance, it was found possible to make straight for Malabar, the important pepper-country.

We also learn from the opening chapter of Mr. Rawlinson's work that from prehistoric times, three great trade-routes have connected India with the West. The easiest, and probably the oldest of these, was the Persian Gulf route, running from the mouth of the Indus to the Euphrates, and up the Euphrates to where the road branches off to Antioch and the Levantine ports. Then there was the overland route from the Indian passes to Balkh, and from Balkh either by river, down the Oxus to the Caspian, and from the Caspian to the Euxine, or entirely by land, by the caravan road which skirts the Karmanian Desert to the north, passes through the Caspian gates, and reaches Antioch by way of Hekatompylos and Ktesiphon. Lastly there is the circuitous sea route down the Persian and Arabian coasts to Aden, up the Red Sea to Suez, and from Suez to Egypt on the one hand and Tyre and Sidon on the other. He says elsewhere that many circumstances concurred, in the two

centuries before Christ, to make the Red Sea route the most popular trade-route with the East. However, with the establishment of the Roman Empire, as he says, traders began to come to Western India in great numbers, both by land and sea.

Thus, India was by no means a *terra incognita* in the days of the Apostles, when trade was brisk with the Roman Empire and there were three well-known trade-routes by which the Apostle Thomas could find his way to the north of India or to the south. As he was in Jerusalem when he made up his mind to accompany the Merchant to India, and went and helped him to carry his goods on board the ship the next day, he must have started from one of the ports near Jerusalem and followed the Red Sea route, which was the most popular trade-route with the East at the time.

XII. ST. PANTÆNUS.

St. Pantænus is supposed to be the first missionary after Apostolic times who entered India, if we exclude Mari, the disciple of Addai, referred to in the chapter at the end on the *Malabar Liturgy*, who is said to have gone down from the north to the southern countries until the odour of St. Thomas was wafted to him and to have brought a great number of people to the Lord, as this does not make it quite clear that he really went into India.

The earliest references to St. Pantænus, connecting him with India, occur in the writings of Eusebius, Bishop of Caesaria, the great Church historian (A.D. 265—340) and St. Jerome (A.D. 340 or 343—420), and they are of special interest. Eusebius, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, gives the following account :—

“About the same time (A.D. 180) the school of the faithful (at Alexandria) was governed by a man most distinguished for his learning, whose name was Pantænus; as there had been a school of sacred learning established there from ancient times, which has continued down to our own times, and which we have understood was

held by men able in eloquence and the study of divine things. For the tradition is that this philosopher was then in great eminence, as he had been first disciplined in the philosophic principles of those called Stoics. But he is said to have displayed such ardour, and so zealous a disposition, respecting the divine word, that he was constituted a herald of the Gospel of Christ to the nations of the East; and advanced even as far as India. For there were still many evangelists of the word, who were ardently striving to employ their inspired zeal after the apostolic example, to increase and build up the divine word. Of these Pantænus is said to have come as far as the Indies. And the report is, that he there found his own arrival anticipated by some who there were acquainted with the Gospel of Matthew, to whom Bartholomew, one of the Apostles, had preached, and had left them the Gospel of Matthew in the Hebrew characters, which was also preserved until this time. Pantænus after many praiseworthy deeds, was finally at the head of the Alexandrian school, commenting on the treasures of divine truth, both orally and in his writings.”

St. Jerome (*Liber de Viris Illustribus*) has two valuable references :

(1) “Pantænus, a philosopher of the Stoic sect, according to a certain old custom in

Alexandria where from Mark the Evangelist there were always Ecclesiastical Doctors, was a man of such prudence and erudition, both in the divine scriptures and in secular knowledge, that he was sent to India by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, at the request of delegates from those people. There he found that Bartholomew, one of the twelve Apostles, had preached the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the Gospel of Matthew, which, written in Hebrew characters, he took with him on his return to Alexandria.”

(2) “Pantænus, on account of the repute of his excellent learning, was sent by Demetrius into India, that he might preach Christ among the Brahmins and philosophers of that nation.”

The facts of importance to be here noted are that Pantænus was a man of great learning, full of apostolic zeal for the propagation of the Gospel; and that on this account he was sent from Alexandria to India to preach to the Brahmins and philosophers of that nation, at the request of delegates sent by the people.

Now, Alexandria in those early days enjoyed an almost ideal situation as an emporium of trade between Europe and the East, and was besides a great seat of learning and the centre of Greek culture after Athens had dwindled into insignificance, so that the See of Alexandria also occupied

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a splendid position. Christian teachers found themselves confronted with the professors of Greek and oriental philosophies. This naturally tended to sharpen their intellects and to compel them to take to deeper study, thus producing men of renown amongst them, so that the Theological School of Alexandria rose to considerable eminence in the first centuries of our era. Its first Principal was St. Pantænus, and he was succeeded by his still more famous pupils Clement and Origin.

Turning to Rawlinson again (*Intercourse between India and the Western World*), we learn further that Dio Chrysostem, who lived in the reign of Trajan and died in or after 117 A.D., mentions Indians among the cosmopolitan crowds to be found in the bazaars of Alexandria, and, he says, they came "by way of trade." It was after this, about the end of the second century, that Pantænus is said to have gone to India. His pupil, Clement of Alexandria, who derived much of his knowledge of India from his master furnishes information which makes it clear that India as we know it now is meant; for he tells us that the Brahmin sect take no wine and abstain from flesh, that they despise death and set no value on life because they believe in transmigration, that the Buddhists worship a kind of

pyramid beneath which they imagine that the bones of a divinity of some kind lie buried. This remarkable allusion to the Buddhist *stupa*, says Rawlinson, is the earliest reference in Western literature to a unique feature of Buddhism, and must have been derived from some informant intimately acquainted with the doctrines of Gautama. He adds that Clement distinguishes clearly between Buddhist and Brahmin, while earlier writers confuse them.

This being so, Dr. Medlycott's contention that the mission field of St. Pantænus was not the 'India of the Brahmins' as St. Jerome has stated, but Arabia Felix, cannot be upheld. He has been at the pains of trying to prove this, because other writers have put forward the claim of St. Pantænus to be the first missionary who came to India after St. Bartholomew, with the object of rejecting the tradition connecting St. Thomas with it. But if there is quite other independent evidence in support of St. Thomas's connection with India, as Dr. Medlycott himself has shown and as we have further brought forward, how is that evidence in any way weakened by conceding that St. Bartholomew at some time, before or after St. Thomas, did visit some part of India, where he left copies of the Gospel of

St. Matthew in Hebrew, one of which St. Pantænus, who was sent from Alexandria to India in the second century, took back with him. But St. Jerome also connects St. Thomas with India in a way as to convey the unmistakable impression that St. Thomas was known in his days as the real Apostle of India, for he writes of our Saviour that "He was present in all places—with Thomas in India, with Peter in Rome, with Paul in Illyria, with Titus in Crete, with Andrew in Achaia, with each apostolic man in each and all countries." Besides, while, as we have already seen from the *Doctrine of the Apostles*, St. Thomas is connected there with India in a special manner, where, it is said, he was "Guide and Ruler in the Church which he built there and ministered there," it is also stated in that document that the Apostles "visited one another" and "ministered to each other." There should be no surprise, therefore, to find it related that St. Bartholomew also visited India.

The Rev. George Milne Rae in his book *The Syrian Church in India* admits that the India to which St. Pantænus was sent was certainly not Arabia Felix, as Mosheim seems to have held; but he endeavours to confine the Saint's missionary labours to Northern India, that is, the India, as

he says, of Alexander the Great. Of course, his whole aim is to make out that Christianity was not introduced into Southern India until the beginning of the sixth century and then only from the Nestorian patriarchate on the banks of the 'Tigris by way of the Persian Gulf, and thus to discredit the tradition connecting St. Thomas with Southern India. Accordingly in support of his contention that St. Bartholomew and St. Pantænus both preached in the North, he makes the assertion that "in the second century," when the latter is reported to have come to India, "there were neither Jews, Christians, nor Brahmins in Malabar," and that the community of Christians of St. Bartholomew, whom he places in the north, were at the end of the second century in so depressed a condition "that they were fain to get help from any quarter, and that perhaps they found it easier, by reason of the regular marine trade with Alexandria, to communicate with the latter than with their own mother Church in Mesopotamia, from which they had long been separated."

Rev. W. J. Richards, for thirty-five years **C. M. S. Missionary** in Travancore and Cochin, who, since Dr. Medlycott wrote, collected fresh evidence in support of the tradition connecting

St. Thomas with Southern India, shows that there were Jews as well as Brahmins in the Apostolic age in Malabar (*The Indian Christians of St. Thomas*, 1908); while we learn from Vincent Smith, a recognized authority on the early history of India, that the Brahmins penetrated into the south many centuries before the Christian era. (*The Oxford History of India*, 1923, page 14.)

As to the suggestion that the moribund Christian community of the north were glad to seek help from Alexandria by reason of the marine trade, rather than from their mother Church in Mesopotamia, which was so much nearer them, it evidently did not occur to Rev. Milne Rae that it really militates against his main contention; for, if it was easier then for the Christian community in the north to be recruited from Alexandria, by reason of the regular marine trade, it must have been just as easy for St. Thomas and St. Pantænus himself after the former, to have found their way to Southern India, while there is no reason why this part of India should have waited for six centuries, in spite of the facilities afforded by the marine trade, before its turn came to be evangelized, and then too, as Mr. Milne Rae would have it, by Nestorians from the banks of the Tigris by way of the Persian Gulf.

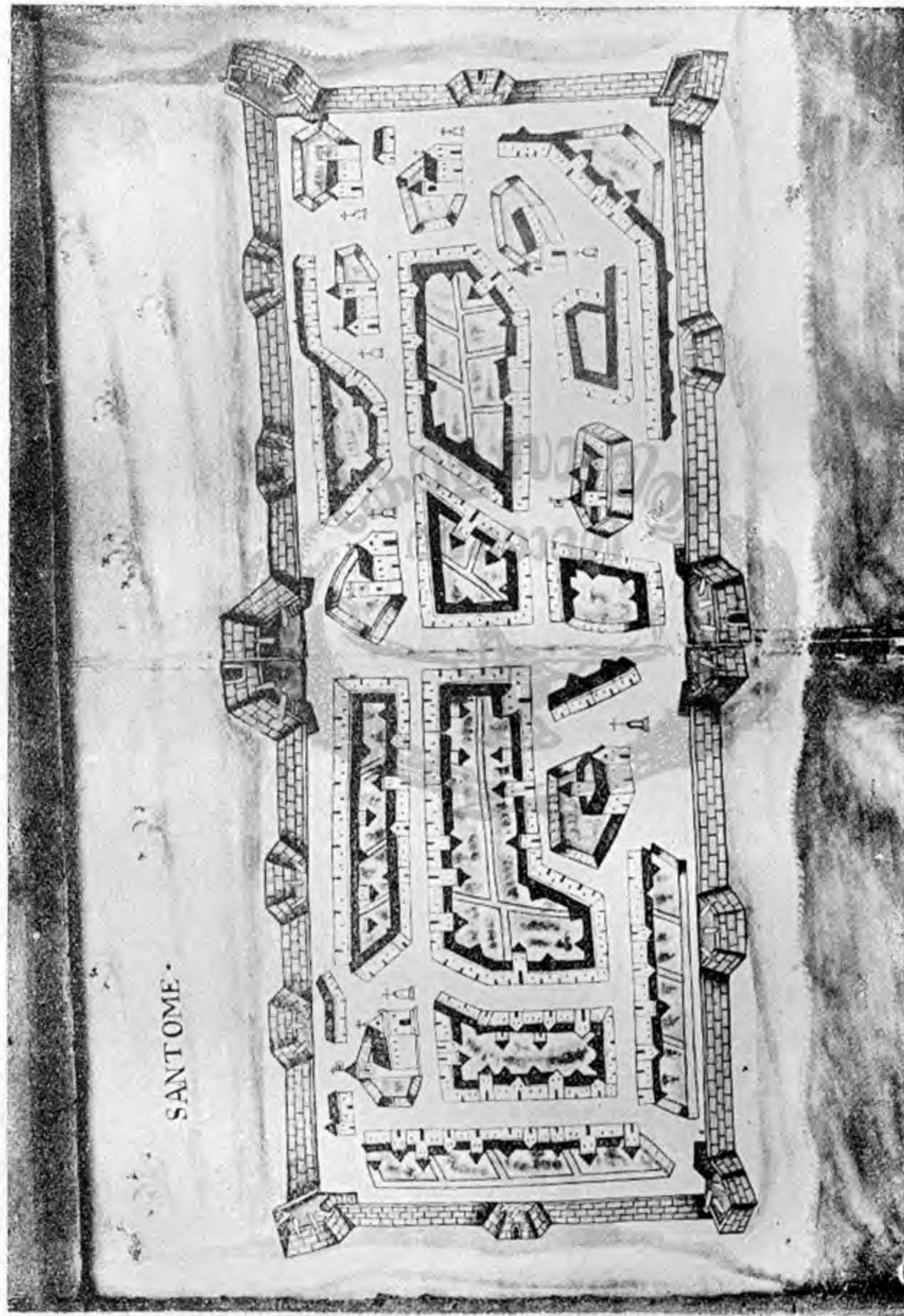
XIII. THE JEWS IN MALABAR.

In connection with the claim to antiquity of the settlement of the Jews in Malabar, the Cochin Census Report, 1901, as quoted by Thurston in *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, 1909, says that they "are supposed to have first come in contact with a Dravidian people as early as the time of Solomon about B.C. 1000, for 'philology proves that the precious cargoes of Solomon's merchant ships came from the ancient coast of Malabar.' It is possible that such visits were frequent enough in the years that followed. But the actual settlement of the Jews on the Malabar Coast might not have taken place until long afterwards. Mr. Logan, in the *Manual of Malabar*, writes that 'the Jews have traditions, which carry back their arrival on the coast to the time of their escape from servitude under Cyrus in the sixth century B.C.', and the same fact is referred to by Sir W. Hunter in his *History of British India*.' This eminent historian, in his *Indian Empire* speaks of Jewish settlements in Malabar long before the second century A.D. A Roman merchant that sailed regularly from Myos Hormuz on the Red Sea to Arabia, Ceylon and Malabar, is reported

to have found a Jewish colony in Malabar in the second century A.D. In regard to the settlement of the Jews in Malabar, Mr. Whish observes that "the Jews themselves say that Mar Thomas, the Apostle, arrived in India in the year of our Lord 52, and themselves, the Jews, in the year 69 ! In view of the commercial intercourse between the Jews and the people of the Malabar Coast long before the Christian era, it seems highly probable that Christianity but followed in the wake of Judaism. The above facts seem to justify the conclusion that the Jews must have settled in Malabar at least as early as the first century A.D."

The very fact that St. Pantænus found in India a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew written in Hebrew, which is said to have been left by St. Bartholomew with the people to whom he preached, lends support to the view that it must have been from the Jews of the Malabar Coast that he obtained the copy he took with him on his return to Alexandria.





PLAN OF SAN THOMÉ ABOUT 1635—AFTER P.B. DE REZENDE.

XIV. ECCLESIASTICAL SUPPORT TO THE TRADITION.

Mr. W. R. Philipps, in the article in the *Indian Antiquary*, April 1903, which we have been dealing with, says : “I am not aware that the ecclesiastical authorities at Rome have ever given any real support to the modern belief that St. Thomas was martyred near Madras, and buried at San Thomé or Mylapore ; there may be documents in which the idea is mentioned, but never, I think, as a fact established ; always with some qualifying phrase so as to leave the question open.” If Mr. Philipps had referred to the Bull of Pope Paul V erecting the diocese of San Thomé of Mylapore in 1606, he would have seen that one reason for doing so was “because there lay buried the body of St. Thomas”—There is no qualifying phrase ; and it is further emphatically stated that the Holy Father “by the apostolic authority has raised it in perpetuity to, and established it as the city of St. Thomas.”

Again Leo XIII in his Apostolic letter, dated the 1st September 1886, establishing the Episcopal hierarchy in the East Indies refers to the tradition in the following terms :

“It has been the constant tradition of the Church that the duty of undertaking the discharge of the apostolic office in the vast regions of the East Indies fell to the lot of St. Thomas. He, indeed it was, as ancient literary monuments testify who, after Christ’s Ascension into Heaven, having travelled to Ethiopia, Persia, Hyrcania and finally to the peninsula beyond the Indus by a most difficult route attended with most serious hardships, first enlightened those nations with the light of Christian truth : and having paid to the Chief Pastor of souls the tribute of his blood, was called away to his everlasting reward in Heaven. From that time forward India never altogether ceased to revere the Apostle who had deserved so well of that country. In the most ancient books of liturgical prayers, as well as in other monuments of those ancient Churches, the name and praises of Thomas were wont to be celebrated, and even in the lapse of ages after a lamentable propagation of error ¹ his memory has in no wise been defaced.”

And further on in the same document where he speaks of new dioceses having been erected in India four centuries ago when the Portuguese possessions grew in extent he refers to the diocese

¹ This confirms our contention in the last chapter on the Malabar Liturgy.

of *Mylapore* as having been established by Paul V in the city of St. Thomas.

And yet, as Mgr. Zaleski, the late Delegate Apostolic of the East Indies, puts it in his work, *The Apostle St. Thomas in India* 1912, there has been a tendency even among some Catholic writers to demolish the old traditions of the Church, which play so important a part in the religious life of the people. They profess to do so in the name of what they consider historical criticism and under pretext of keeping on a level with modern scientific methods. We may add that these writers lose sight of the fact that considering the vicissitudes through which the world has passed, the absence of positive contemporary evidence in favour of these old traditions is no proof that they are not founded on fact.

XV. CONCLUSIONS.

Apart from the legends connected with the tradition, to sum up, the weight of evidence and probability would seem plainly to support the following conclusions :—

(1) That St. Thomas did visit and preach the Gospel in *India*, that is, India as we know it now ;

(2) That as two very ancient documents, such as the *Doctrine of the Apostles* and the *Acts of St. Thomas* state, one, that “India and all its own countries and those bordering on it, even to the farthest sea, received the Apostle’s hand of Priesthood from Judas Thomas, who was Guide and Ruler in the Church which he built there and ministered there,” and the other, that the Apostle preached “throughout all India,” and as St. Ephraem refers to the people of the land, which fell to the lot of St. Thomas, as “dark” and “sun-burnt”, while Dr. Fleet admits that the term “India” as used by ancient writers included the whole of the south-eastern part of Asia on the south of the Himalaya Mountains so as to take in Burma and Siam, Cochin-China, the Malay

Peninsula and the Indian Archipelago, there is no reason why Southern India should be excluded from the field of the Apostle's labours as some writers have endeavoured to do, in the face of such evidence and in spite of the persistent tradition connecting St. Thomas with it ;

(3) That the Apostle did visit the Courts of two Kings reigning in India, one of whom may be taken for certainty to be *Gondophares* in the North, while the other mentioned in the *Acts as Mazdai* may reasonably be identified with *Mahadeva*, a name common enough among Kings of the South Indian dynasties, since the suggestion to identify King Mazdai with Vasudeva of Mathura, who, as we have shown, was not contemporary with St. Thomas, cannot now be maintained ;

(4) That it may be taken, therefore, that the Apostle was martyred in Southern India "outside the City" and "on a mountain," as related in the *Acts*, and that St. Thomas' Mount and Mylapore are the only places which have been identified with the *mountain* and *city* where the Apostle was martyred and buried, by a persistent tradition, the like of which cannot be traced as having ever existed in connection with any other place or places in India or elsewhere ;

(5) That his remains were at a very early period removed from India to Edessa, thence to Chios and finally to Ortona, where they now repose ;

(6) That, as at the original removal part of the remains were left behind in India as appears from St. Ephraem, the relics still preserved in an ancient reliquary in the Cathedral at St. Thomé may, not unlikely, be parts of the relics left in the tomb.

It is interesting to note here how the various traditions regarding the Apostle, so far as the main features are concerned, mutually support each other. It is for those who contest them to prove that they are inconsistent with any known facts. Until then, we may rest assured, they will continue to hold the field.

PART III.
THE LEGENDS.

I. MIRACLES.

Luis Vas de Camoes (or Camoens), the most sublime figure in the history of Portuguese literature, in his great epic poem, *the Lusiads*, which celebrates the glories of Portuguese conquests in India, thus sings of St. Thomas, the Apostle, and Mylapore :—

“Here rose the potent city, Meliapor
Named, in olden time rich, vast and grand :
Her sons their olden idols did adore
As still adoreth that iniquitous band :
In those past ages stood she far from shore,
When to declare glad tidings over the land
Thomé came preaching after he had trod
A thousand regions taught to know his God.

Here came he preaching, and the while he gave
Health to the sick, revival to the dead ;
When chance one day brought floating o’er the wave
A forest tree of size unmeasured :
The King a Palace building lief would save
The waif for timber, and determined
The mighty bulk of trunk ashore to train
By force of engines, elephants and men.

Now was that lumber of such vasty size,
 No jot it moves, however hard they bear;
 When lo! th' Apostle of Christ's verities
 Wastes in the business less of toil and care:
 His trailing waist-cord to the tree he ties,
 Raises and *sans* an effort hales it where
 A sumptuous Temple he would rear sublime,
 A fixt example for all future time.

Right well he knew how 'tis of Faith aver'd
 'Faith moveth mountains' will or nill they move,
 Lending a listening ear to Holy Word:
 As Christ had taught him, so 'twas his to prove:
 By such a miracle much the mob was stir'd;
 The Brahmins held it something from above;
 For, seen his signs and seen his saintly life,
 They fear the loss of old prerogative.

These be the sacerdotes of Géntoo-Creed,
 That of sore jealousy felt most the pain;
 They seek ill ways a thousand and take rede
 Thomé to silence or to gar him slain:
 The Principal who dons the three-twine threac,
 By a deed of horror makes the lesson plain,
 There be no Hatred fell, and fere and curst,
 As by false Virtue for true Virtue nurst.

One of his sons he slaughters and accuses
 Thomé of murther, who was innocent;
 Bringing false witnesses, as there the use is,
 Him to the death they doom incontinent.

The Saint, assured that his best excuses
Are his appeals to God Omnipotent,
Prepares to work before the King and Court
A publick marvel of the major sort.

He bids be brought the body of the slain
That it may live again and be affied
To name its slayer, and its word be tane
As proof of testimony certified.
All saw the youth revive, arise again
In name of Jesu Christ the Crucified;
Thomé he thanks when raised to life anew
And names his father as the man who slew.

So much of marvel did this miracle claim,
Straightway in Holy water baths the King
Followed by many: These kiss Thomé's hem
While those the praises of his Godhead sing.
Such ire the Brahmans and such furies' flame,
Envy so pricks them with her venom'd sting,
That rousing ruffian-rout to wrath condign
A second slaughter-plot the Priests design.

One day when preaching to the folk he stood,
They feigned a quarrel 'mind the mob to rise:
Already Christ His Holy man endow'd
With saintly martyrdom that open the skies.
Rained innumerable stones the crowd
Upon the victim, sacred sacrifice,
And last a villain, hastier than the rest,
Pierced with a cruel spear his godly breast.

144 ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE, IN INDIA

Wept Ganges and Indus, true Thomé thy fate,
Wept thee whatever lands thy foot had trod;
Yet weep thee more the souls in blissful state
Thou led'st to don the robes of Holy Rood.
But Angels waiting at the Paradise-gate
Meet thee with smiling faces, hymning God.
We pray thee, pray that still vouchsafe thy Lord
Unto thy Lusians His good aid afford.

(Burton's *The Lusiads*, Canto X, vs. 109-118).



II. THE LOG.

Now the “forest tree of size unmeasured” or the great ‘log’ plays an important part in the local legends of Mylapore and helps to identify the place, as we have seen from Mr. Kennedy’s admission in *The East and the West*, referred to in an earlier chapter; for, it is said, it blocked up the river and no human force could move it, until the Apostle drew it after him by means of his girdle. The king thereupon gave him leave to make his chapel of the same piece of wood. This legend of the log is related by Bishop John de Marignolli and by Linschoten (see pages 125—127 of *India and the Apostle Thomas* by Medlycott, 1905). In course of time a monastery was added to the Church, and the spot came to be known among the Persian and Arab traders as *Betumah*, the House of Thomas.

III. OTHER LEGENDS.

Some interesting details in connection with these legends, as related by old Portuguese and other writers, will be found in Col. Love's *Vestiges of Old Madras*. Even if they are pure inventions, it must be observed that this fact does not in any way militate against our chief contention that the Apostle did come to Southern India and was martyred on a hill near Madras, seeing that it is supported, as we have shown, by quite other independent evidence. On the other hand, the absence of positive evidence in support of these legends is no proof that the main facts, however much they may have been added to and distorted, are not based on reality, or are by any means out of keeping with the belief founded on Scripture that the Apostles went forth into the world endowed with the gift of speech and the power of performing miracles.

PART IV.

THE MALABAR LITURGY.

This is a subject that has been brought in by many writers in discussing the question of the St. Thomas tradition and the St. Thomas Christians in India. The reason is that there has been a wide-spread impression that the Portuguese had entirely abolished the ancient liturgy of Southern India or had romanized it, destroying at the same time all their Syriac literature, so that no old documents survive from which their past history can now be gathered. This has engendered a strong prejudice against the Portuguese in many quarters, Catholic and non-Catholic. The following facts it is hoped will help to dispel that false impression and create a feeling of gratitude towards the pioneers of modern missions, especially as they never treated the Malabar Christians in the manner that heretics are usually dealt with, beyond calling to account certain individuals in authority, such as some of their bishops, who were charged with heresy ; but on the contrary they all along regarded them as children of the Church, who through ignorance and want of control from the fountain head of

Christianity and long contact with Nestorian missionaries had allowed themselves to be led into error, from which they, the Portuguese missionaries, in perfect good faith, felt it to be their duty to purge them and reclaim them for the sake of their souls.

In Christian usage liturgy means the public official services of the Church as opposed to private devotion. In all Eastern Churches the word is restricted to the chief official service only—the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist which in the Roman rite is called the Mass. The language of the liturgy used by the St. Thomas Christians of the Malabar Coast has been Syriac from the earliest times. Syriac or Aramæan was the language of St. Thomas and Our Lord.

In an earlier chapter we stated that Thaddæus (in Syriac Addai or Addæus) was sent by St. Thomas to Edessa to cure King Abgar and evangelize the country. Addai and his disciple Mari are said to have converted the King and the people of Edessa, to have organized the Christian Church there, and to have composed the liturgy which bears their names.¹ From the *Acta Maris* (sixth century) it appears that, after preaching in the country of the Huzites, Mari

¹ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, v. 1, p. 186.

“went down to the southern countries until the odour of Thomas, the Apostle, was wafted to him; and there also he brought a great number of people to the Lord, and detained in those countries a disciple named Job, to minister to them.”¹ As the Malabar Coast was well known to traders then, it must have been about this time that the Liturgy of Addai and Mari, or the East Syrian Liturgy as it is called, was introduced to the St. Thomas Christians of that coast, if not by Mari or his disciple, by missionaries sent by them.

The next missionary who came to India, as we have seen already, is Pantænus, who was sent by Demetrius, the Bishop of Alexandria at the request of delegates from the people themselves. He was quite orthodox and must have found the Christians in India equally so.

Then we find from the *Chronique de Seert*² that during the Patriarchate of Shahlupha and Papa, about A.D. 295—300, Dudi (David), Bishop of Basrah, left his See and went to India, where he evangelized many people. He was evidently also orthodox. Dr. Mingana remarks

¹ Bedjan's *Acta Mart. et sanet.*, i., 90. Mingana, pp. 28, 29. Medlycott, pp. 36, 37.

² In *Pat. Orient*, iv, pp. 236 and 292. Mingana, pp. 18, 63.

that he is the first bishop mentioned by name in history, and must presumably have had his seat somewhere near the Malabar Coast.

The next bishop of whom history makes mention is John, who in the Council of Nicæa (325 A.D.), which condemned Arianism, signed himself as Bishop of Persia and Great India. Even if his seat was in Persia or the North of India, he must have exercised jurisdiction over the whole of India, as in more recent years the Archbishop of Goa exercised jurisdiction over the whole of India and the East. The Malabar Christians must have been subject to his jurisdiction and must have had their missionaries sent by him, and we may take it remained orthodox during his time.

The third bishop of whom we have any traces, says Dr. Mingana (p. 64), is Joseph of Edessa, who in A.D. 345 was sent by the Catholicos of the East to the Coast of Malabar. How far he was orthodox or not it is difficult to say as Arianism was in the air then.

But about nine years later (354 A.D.) the Emperor Constantius, who had set his heart on establishing Arianism even in the Churches outside the boundaries of the Roman Empire, as he had supported it in those within the Empire, equipped and sent a mission to the Sabeans of South Arabia, to Abyssinia, Ceylon and India, at

the head of which he placed Theophilus, called the Indian, as he is believed to be a native of one of the islands of the Maldives, who when very young was sent to Rome as a hostage during the reign of Constantine. The sole historian is Philostorgius, the Arian, who is quoted by Photius in *Bibliotheca* ¹. After visiting the other countries, Theophilus is said to have sailed for the Maldives. "Thence," the narrative continues, "he sailed to other parts of India and reformed many things which were not rightly done among them; for they heard the reading of the Gospel in a sitting posture, and did other things which were repugnant to the divine law; and having reformed everything according to holy usage, as was most acceptable to God, he also confirmed the dogma of the Church." The Arian historian's last statement would seem to imply an attempt on the part of Theophilus to introduce his heretical tenets in the Churches in India, or the presence already of Arianism there.

However, in the following century the Nestorian heresy arose; and, although Nestorius was condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431, it soon spread throughout the Persian Empire;² and as the Persian Sovereigns had often

¹ Medlycott, *India and the Apostle Thomas*, p. 188.

² See Part I, Chapter II, for a fuller account of the Church of Edessa and the Nestorians.

prohibited by edict intercommunication with the countries towards the west, of the Church under their protection and sway, the latter had the monopoly of ministering to all the Churches in the east, and of spreading the Gospel, as interpreted by them, over the best part of Asia. As Gibbon says : “From the conquest of Persia they carried their spiritual arms to the North, the East, and the South ; and the simplicity of the Gospel was fashioned and painted with the colours of the Syriac theology. In the sixth century, according to the report of a Nestorian traveller, Christianity was successfully preached to the Bactrians, the Huns, the Persians, the Indians, the Persarmenians, the Medes, and the Elamites : the Barbaric Churches from the Gulf of Persia to the Caspian Sea were almost infinite ; and their recent faith was conspicuous in the number and sanctity of their monks and martyrs. The pepper coast of Malabar and the isles of the ocean, Socotra and Ceylon, were peopled with an increasing multitude of Christians, and the bishops and clergy of those sequestered regions derived their ordination from the Catholicus of Babylon.”

Although the Nestorian Church continued to be successful for some centuries, it was unequal to the trial when wars and persecutions overtook

it, and it dwindled into insignificance by the end of the fourteenth century. The Malabar Christians, however, continued to be under the control of the Catholicus of Babylon, and were served by ministers sent by him until the arrival of the Portuguese at the end of the fifteenth century.

Under such circumstances it would have been a miracle indeed if the Portuguese on their arrival did not find the St. Thomas Christians infected with the Nestorian heresy, especially their liturgy, the East-Syrian Liturgy of Addai and Mari, which must have been adopted by them untainted in the early stage, but which was revised by the Patriarch Jesuyab III who lived about the beginning of the seventh century, and was introduced in all the Churches wherever the Syriac language was used.¹ And here we must remark again that the Portuguese, who rejoiced to find in India a large community of Christians claiming to be the descendants of converts of St. Thomas, the Apostle, at once welcomed them as children of the Church, and, even when they discovered them to be tainted with the Nestorian heresy², did not treat them as heretics, but continued to regard them as mem-

¹ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, v. 1, p. 136.

² This is confirmed by the extract from the Apostolic Letter of Leo XIII given on page 136.

bers of the faithful who had unwittingly fallen into error, from which they felt it to be their duty to purge them and reclaim them. The first thing, therefore, was to examine and revise their liturgy. As we said, there is a general impression that in doing so the Portuguese 'romanized' that liturgy. That this is not the case has been pointed out by the Rev. R. H. Connolly, O.S.B., in two papers in the *Journal of Theological Studies* of April and July 1914, pp. 396—425, 569—593, entitled "The Work of Menezes on the Malabar Liturgy."

When the first edition of the present work was published in 1922 a copy was sent to Dr. F. C. Burkitt, of the University of Cambridge, who is the author of the article on *St. Thomas, the Apostle* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* which was criticised by us in our little volume. Dr. Burkitt, while acknowledging receipt of the book sent and referring to a work of his on *Early Eastern Christianity*, at the same time drew our attention to the two papers by Dom Connolly referred to above, and remarked that they "should be known to every Catholic Christian in India"; that "A Menezes was Archbishop of Goa in 1599, and he is generally regarded as having entirely abolished the ancient liturgy of Southern India, but that Dom Connolly shows that he changed it very little, for the Malabar and the East-Syrian Liturgy of Addai and Mari are one and the same."

We had occasion before this to draw attention to and summarize Dom Connolly's papers in the *Catholic Register* of April 1924. We reproduce here more or less what we then wrote.

In the first article of April 1914, Dom Connolly shows by means of a detailed Concordance that the Malabar Liturgy is essentially the same as the East-Syrian Liturgy of Addai and Mari. The only material difference between the two was found to lie (1) in the order of that very subordinate part of the service embodying the lections, etc., and preceding the Creed, and (2) in the fact that the Malabar text (in its revised form at all events) contains a formula of Institution, whereas Addai and Mari has no Institution.

The aim of the second paper of July 1914 is "to discover, if possible, what exactly it was that Menezes did to the Malabar Liturgy, and therefore how far we may be able to get behind his revision of it to the original text." The documents at our disposal for this purpose, says Dom Connolly, are mainly two: (a) the Acts of the Synod of Diamper explaining the alterations to be made; (b) a Latin version of the Malabar Liturgy (first published by Gouvea in 1606, and afterwards re-edited by Raulin in 1745), in which the corrections prescribed by the Synod are incorporated in

the text. The value of the Acts of the Synod for our purpose, he says, lies in this : Act V gives us not only a list of the corrections ordered to be introduced into the text of the existing Malabar Liturgy of 'the Apostles,' but also the original reading in each case. The general method of proceeding is as follows : first the original text is quoted at sufficient length to give the setting of the words or phrases in it to which exception is taken ; then the passage is repeated (wholly or in part) in its emended form ; and if the doctrinal import of the change is considered not to be self-evident, its force and meaning are briefly explained. Not infrequently also the opening words of the formula in which the correction is to be made are quoted, or some other indication is given of its place in the liturgy.

Writing on the purpose of the Decrees on the revision of the liturgy, Dom Connolly remarks : "It appears to be supposed in some quarters that the Synod of Diamper ordered *all* the old service books to be destroyed out of hand, and that herein we have an explanation of the fact that no copy of the old, unexpurgated, liturgy is now to be found. Had this been the case, it is evident that Menezes and his collaborators must have had ready a large stock of new and expurgated copies with which to

replace the old ones, or at least must have had in view an immediate possibility of procuring them. Fortunately from the point of view of the present-day liturgist, this was not so : they neither had any such new books, nor had they any present means of obtaining them. The state of things is clearly exposed in the first of the decrees dealing with the revision," a passage from which he here quotes. It is to the effect that all the Ritual books of the sacrifice, or Missals, ought, on account of their being vitiated by Nestorian heretics, to be burnt ; but that as the supply of other books with which Mass could be celebrated is wanting, and the Holy See has not decreed what should be done, and has not sent the Missals written in the Chaldæan language as urgently and humbly solicited by the Synod, the Synod decrees that the existing books be expurgated and the alterations mentioned be inserted therein ; and further that until the Metropolitan has made his visitation, together with the learned men and those well-versed in the Chaldæan language, whom he should appoint for the work, and has carried out the corrections, no Priests should make use of them.

A passage to the like effect in Act III decree 15, with regard to the Malabar Breviary and other prayer books, is also quoted. Here, while remarking that all these books, as well as the breviaries should be given over to the flames, the Synod

nevertheless orders them to be corrected, because in this Diocese other Sacred books are not available, which Priests may use in celebrating divine offices.

The Decree goes on to prescribe that these books be purged of certain errors, heretical names, etc., and that special offices in honour of heretical personages be cut out whole, torn up, and burned. "The fact of importance here," observes Dom Connolly in a foot-note, "is that the missals themselves were not destroyed: and in particular the liturgy of the Apostles was preserved for use in an emended form."

Menezes, then, would have been glad enough, he remarks, "to make a clean sweep of the old liturgical books, and to set before his Malabar converts fresh copies, wherein no trace of the expurgated passages would appear to remind them of the treatment to which their traditional formularies had been subjected. But this he could not afford to do: and we can hardly doubt that it is to this circumstance we owe the preservation of the list of original readings and the corresponding list of corrections found in the Acts of the Synod (Raulin, pp. 145—153). If Menezes had had at hand a supply of expurgated copies, such as he

hoped might later on be procured from Rome, the Acts of the Synod would, in all likelihood, have contained no record of the changes made : the old books would at once have been destroyed, and the convert Nestorians would have been encouraged by all means to forget the differences between the old and the new."

"The purpose then of these decrees," he says, "was to provide an official direction as to how the existing copies of liturgical books were to be corrected when, shortly after the Synod, Menezes should make his visitation of the native churches in company with the 'docti viri et Chaldaicæ linguæ periti' who were to carry out the actual work of expurgation."

After giving references (1) to the pages in Raulin's edition of the Acts of the Synod on which the changes are prescribed, (2) to the pages on which the changes are found embodied in the revised text of the Liturgy, and (3) to the pages in Brightman on which the corresponding passages occur in the liturgy of Addai and Mari, and explaining in detail the nature of the changes introduced, Dom Connolly arrives at the following conclusions :

1. The Malabar Liturgy is essentially the same as the East-Syrian Liturgy of Addai and Mari. The differences between the two are—apart from

the order in an early part of the service, and the presence in 'Malabar' of a formula of Institution —no more than we might naturally expect in the case of any rite current in two widely distant localities.

2. The Synod of Diamper nowhere interfered with the order of the text under revision; and consequently Dr. Neale's rearrangement of the anaphora on the model of 'Theodore' is wholly inadmissible.

3. All verbal changes made by the Synod are specified in the Acts except in the case of the Creed and the *verba consecrationis* of the Institution; in these two cases any verbal changes not specified are covered by a general direction as to conformity with the Roman Missal.

4. The Invocation was left unaltered except for the insertion of the word 'filii' after 'Christi.'

5. Already before the revision the formula of Institution stood where it now stands in the prints of Gouvea and Raulin, that is, just before the Fraction.

6. The only passages into which words were introduced from the Roman Missal are the Creed, the 'words of consecration' (as already explained), and a response of the people. To this response were added some words from the Roman prayer *Te igitur*.

7. Consequently it is misleading to say that the Synod of Diamper 'romanized' the Malabar Liturgy, or to any appreciable extent 'assimilated' it to the Roman rite : all the changes made were doctrinal in purpose, not liturgical.

8. With the help of the Acts of the Synod of Diamper, of Gouvca's Latin text of the revised Liturgy and his Preface to it, of the Roman Syriac edition of 1774, and finally of the Urmi Syriac text of 'Addai and Mari,' it should be possible, by employing critical methods to reconstruct a considerable part of the Syriac text of the old Malabar rite as it stood in the copy from which the existing Latin translation was made.

And then, it must be noted that Dom Connolly emphasizes the fact that "Menezes, an Augustinian friar, and his chief advisers and coadjutors in the work of revision, the Jesuit fathers of Goa, had passed through what is called the schools, and were thoroughly imbued with the formal scholastic theology immediately sequent on the Council of 'Trent'"; and again, that "Menezes and his friends, were trained theologians, thoroughly drilled in the 'Theology of the Schools, and like trained theologians they go straight to the root of the matter.'"

We may quote also the closing lines of Mr. Edmond Bishop from the note he has added

to Dom Connolly's articles, on the value of the East-Syrian rite for the study of early liturgy and on the importance of the Malabar tradition as a second witness to its text. Mr. Edmond Bishop writes : "If, as *l'envoi*, we come to the personal question, in which poor Menezes has suffered severely at the hands of the liturgists (who it may safely be said never themselves took the trouble really to examine the case), surely the time has come to recognize that the character of this man for truthfulness and honesty is 'good and fair.' And with this attempt to get an extension of the mantle of charity to Aleixo de Menezes, I close."

To the foregoing tributes to Archbishop Menezes, we may add some remarks of the Rev. J. N. Ogilvie, D.D., of the Church of Scotland, who, though a Non-Catholic, has thought fit to include him among *The Apostles of India* in a recent work of his so entitled, as he regards him as one of the outstanding figures among the missionaries of the Church in India. A hostile critic, he is by no means in sympathy with Rome. He remarks that Archbishop Menezes "lives in history as the man who, in India, brought under the heel of Rome the Syrian Church of Malabar"; and he believes that Rome's victory in this case "meant the blotting out of a purer creed and practice than her own."

He further believes that there was a wholesale destruction of every record of the past history of the Syrian Church, and waxes wrath over the "vandalism that was fit," as he says, "to be pilloried alongside the act of Omar the Moham-medan vandal who gave to the flames the noble library of Alexandria—and without the vandal's excuse." As to how far this condemnation of the destruction of records is justified or not the reader can judge for himself from what he has already read and from what follows, as it was not as whole-sale as is believed. •

However, the fact of Rev. Ogilvie being a hostile critic makes his appreciations of Archbishop Menezes still more valuable. He refers to him as "one of the ablest ecclesiastics ever sent by Rome to India." As he says, "a brilliant career as a scholar and preacher at Lisbon had led to his appointment as Court preacher at Madrid under Philip II, and this in 1595 was followed by his selection for the important post of Archbishop of Goa."

Referring to the demonstration of loyalty by the people he had so completely won over and their request that he might transfer his see from Goa to Angamale, the Rev. Ogilvie remarks: "Menezes courteously assured them he would

bring their request to the notice of the Roman Pontiff with whom the decision lay. Whether he had really any intention or desire to accede to their wishes is extremely doubtful, but that on his departure from the country of the conquered Church, such a desire should be expressed by the people he had conquered was indisputable evidence of the greatness of his victory. He had been absent from Goa only ten and a half months, and in that brief period he had mastered the Church that had stood proudly independent for a thousand years, and had brought it a willing captive to the feet of Rome.”

And again: “Menezes had convictions, strong, deep, and steadfast. Rome was to him the one true Church, the one custodian and channel of divine grace. That was his faith. In that he lived, and for that faith, had the need arisen, he would have bravely died. However much we may disapprove of his theology and condemn his methods, yet we recognize that in him we look upon a *man*, possessed of force, conviction, and devotedness to the highest that he knew.”

In concluding he writes: “So Menezes triumphed, and the effects of his triumph remain to this day. It is true that fifty years later, in 1653, when the Portuguese were driven from

Malabar by the Dutch, the Syrians revolted from their Roman bondage and resumed connection with Chaldæan Christianity; but it is also true that more than half the community repented and were speedily regained by Rome, and that even those who remained apart retained many of the Roman ways which they had learned to love in their half century of captivity So Menezes being dead yet speaketh. For good or ill his work abides, and his life stands out before India as a striking instance of what a strong man can do, in whose heart is a conviction of the truth and right of the cause for which he labours."

Yet in spite of all these facts, it is surprising to find Dr. Mingana in his article on *the Early Spread of Christianity in India* in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester, July 1926, commit himself to the following statement in regard to the Synod of Diamper :

"In reading the *Jornada* of Antonio de Gouvea, who recorded the proceedings of the Synod and the events that preceded and followed it, we cannot but deprecate the ignorance displayed by the Western missionaries and prelates who took part in it, on many questions related to the East Syrian Church. A man like the learned author of the *Bibliotheca Orientalis* was not yet

born to erase the many truly stupid things said in it concerning the greatest missionary Church the world has ever known.”

So much for Dr. Mingana's judgment! As for the learned author of the *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, Dr. Mingana ought to know that Assemani, the famous oriental scholar who is referred to, was titular Archbishop of Tyre and Librarian of the Vatican Library, and that he is the most unlikely man who would endorse his views, or call in question the decrees of the Synod or the ability or fitness of Archbishop Menezes and his Syriac experts for the work he was deputed to do by the Holy See.

As to the books said to have been destroyed, Dr. Mingana blows hot and cold. He says: “The Synod declared that all books which were opposed in any way whatsoever to the doctrine of the Church of Rome were to be burnt without pity.” And then: “The Biblical manuscripts and the office-books of the Hudhra and Gazza were affected only to the extent that they had to be purged of all Nestorian names and Nestorian Saints, and generally amended in accordance with the teaching of the Church of Rome. Cambridge Oo. 1, 22, and other manuscripts show signs of such erasures.” He gives a list of the books destroyed,

and he adds : “It is not surprising, therefore, that only few Syrian-Indian manuscripts written before 1599 have come down to posterity. A relentless war waged on them in India since that date has made them very scarce.” And yet he says : “by a curious irony of fate the Vatican Library contains nearly all of them.” And he gives a list of these also. The Vatican Library, as we know, is open to research scholars, and probably more Syriac literature relating to the Indian Christians will be found in time, as it is incredible that the Portuguese authorities in India would not have taken measures to send copies of the books destroyed to the Vatican Library for safe-keeping and record there. This, of course, would be omitted from the decrees of the Synod.

We trust that the facts now brought to light will appeal to the minds of those Catholics especially who have been much prejudiced by false accounts of the case, and will kindle in them a sense of gratitude for the genuine service rendered by Archbishop Menezes and his collaborators to the Christians of St. Thomas in the interests of their souls.

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APPRECIATIONS OF THE FIRST EDITION.

**ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE,
IN INDIA.**

An Investigation based on the latest researches in connection
with the Time-honoured Tradition regarding the
martyrdom of St. Thomas in Southern India

BY

F. A. D'CRUZ, K.S.G.,

*Retired Superintendent, General Records, Government
Secretariat, Madras, and Editor, "The Catholic
Register," San Thomé, Mylapore.*

The Holy Father's Appreciation.

His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State to His Holiness the Pope, writes to His Lordship the Bishop of Mylapore:—I have received and hastened to place in the venerable hands of His Holiness according to the desire of Your Lordship the copy sent me of the book "St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India" of Mr. F. A. D'Cruz of your diocese. The august Pontiff has manifested his extreme pleasure in accepting the homage of Your Lordship and has much appreciated the noble intentions of the writer as also the indisputable merits of his method of criticism and of his vast culture. The Holy Father, therefore, while heartily congratulating the distinguished writer, imparts to him and to Your Lordship, with a full heart, the Apostolic Benediction.

Opinions of Archbishops, Bishops and Others.

Extracted from letters addressed to the Very Rev. Mgr. A. M. Teixeira and the author:—

The Archbishop of Verapoly writes:—I most gratefully thank you for the complementary copy of “St. Thomas, the Apostle of India,” by Mr. F. A. D’Cruz, K.S.G., which you so kindly have sent me. I have gone through it and find it very instructive and interesting, a worthy contribution to the valuable literature that for centuries has been accumulated on a subject that so strongly appeals to all the Christians in India, and especially Missionaries who have come to India in the belief that we are called to continue the work so gloriously initiated by the Apostle St. Thomas. Mr. D’Cruz deserves high praise for his patient labour and study and is to be congratulated for the success with which his endeavour has been rewarded. Please kindly convey to him my heartiest congratulations and blessings and my best wishes that his volume may have the desired effect and may cause an increase of devotion to St. Thomas in all the Christians in India.

The Vicar Apostolic of Ernakulam writes:—When some people are raising up doubts as to the authenticity of the place of our Apostle, the publication of this book is very welcome. . . .

The Bishop of Trichur writes:—We are grateful to the author, he has made it an easy reading—the vast old and new literature on India and St. Thomas, the Apostle. . . .

The Bishop of Kumbakonam writes:—. . . . Though a small book it is full of things, and all these things are so clearly exposed that the book is read with great profit and interest.

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The Bishop of Patna writes:— . . . I have rapidly gone through the book and entirely agree with what you state in the introduction and esteem that the booklet can easily take the place of many longer works.

The Bishop of Nagpur writes:— . . . It was a grand idea to gather together in a not too bulky volume and in a form accessible to the general public, the chief items, of information that can be found about St. Thomas' Apostolate in India. I myself was much interested particularly with the description of the intercourse of the Romans with India and the establishment of the Jews and consequently of Christianity.

The Rev. J. Van Lamberghé, S.J., the Vicar Administrator of the Prefecture Apostolic of Assam, writes:— . . . I am to thank you most sincerely for the copy of "St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India." I am reading it and must congratulate the writer on his valuable contribution to the history of the Church in India. . . .

The Bishop of Mangalore writes:— . . . I have read the book carefully and with great interest and I fully agree with you in your introduction that the author deserves the thanks and congratulations not only of the Diocese of Mylapore, but of all the Catholics of India for having so ably put before them the solid grounds on which rests the tradition that St. Thomas, the Apostle, introduced Christianity in Southern India and sealed the faith with his own blood at Mylapore. . . .

The Bishop of Jaffna writes:—I read with great interest the little book, "St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India," you had the delicate attention of sending me. The author's arguments go a long way to prove that the tradition so dear to the Catholics of Southern India is well grounded.

The Vicar Apostolic of Eastern Burma writes:— It is really a very interesting book and therefore I thank you heartily for the kindness and generosity in sending to me this so appreciated book and be sure that I will remember you in my prayers. . . .

The Archbishop of Agra says:—Thank you very much for the very interesting life of St. Thomas you have sent me. I have read it through with the greatest pleasure and trust it will do much to spread the honour and devotion due to the great Apostle of India. . . .

The Bishop of Trichinopoly writes:— I thank you heartily for kind remembrance, and I congratulate you.

The Bishop of Mylapore writes:—I warmly congratulate you and offer you many thanks for the publication of your learned and fine work on our glorious Apostle St. Thomas. I hope to have the pleasure to confirm personally these my feelings within a little while. I bless you and yours with my whole heart.

The Rev. H. Hosten, S.J., of St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling, writes:— Many thanks for your scholarly article. . . . I read it at one sitting the moment I received the first copy, and I am quite pleased with it.

Colonel H. D. LOVE, R.E., author of *Vestiges of Old Madras*, writes:—I duly received your letter. . . . together with a copy of your book, *St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India*. This work I have perused with great interest and I congratulate you on the result of your labours. The book affords in brief compass an abstract (1) of the evidence of the centuries regarding St. Thomas' mission to India, (2) of the handling of the evidence by all the principal authorities, and

(3) the conclusions deducible from the evidence. You have marshalled your facts and arguments lucidly, and are happy in your phrasing. Though I have not critically studied the subject, I have read some of its literature, and I venture to express the opinion that you have made a very useful contribution to it. . . . The illustrations add materially to the value of the book. . . .

Sir Alexander Cardew, I.C.S. (Retired), writes :—I write to thank you for so kindly sending me a copy of your interesting work on St. Thomas' connection with S. India. Little as I know of the subject, I can see that you have bestowed no small amount of labour on it and have given it a very large amount of study. I hope that the verdict of the specialists will be entirely favourable to the conclusion at which you have arrived, but the work itself and the interest it has created for you will, in any case, I feel sure have been an almost sufficient reward. . . . You are doubtless continuing your study of the early history of Christianity in S. India, as there are other questions besides that of St. Thomas awaiting investigation. Wishing you further success.

Opinions of the Press.

The Simla Times writes :—

. The gist of the work can scarcely be more lucidly expressed than in the words of the introduction written by the Very Rev. A. M. Teixeira, Vicar-General, and Administrator of the Diocese of Mylapore; "The author's position is—(1) that even if the evidence as far as available is not such as to compel belief, it nevertheless argues very strongly in favour of the tradition which places the martyrdom of St. Thomas in Southern India; and (2) that the writers who

have tried to discredit or disprove it, have failed to do so. Bearing this in mind, sceptics and *ultra* critics will set themselves a hard task should they persevere in trying to destroy a hoary tradition based upon such pertinent facts as our author has so well succeeded in marshalling together in this relatively small publication." The author's position as thus defined is an entirely reasonable one. . . . It does not seem rash to predict that this book, small though it be, will help towards turning the scales in favour of the traditional belief respecting St. Thomas' Apostolate and martyrdom in Southern India.

The Morning Star writes:—

We have to thank the author for the clear and scholarly treatment of an old and interesting problem in Indian Church History. . . . For a fuller statement of the case and for many interesting details, we must refer the reader to the book itself.

The remains of the first Apostle of India are now at Ortona in Italy, while the very body of another is at Goa. May the great Apostle of India still preside over her conversion and foremost unite in a common faith the ancient community which glories in the name of "The Christians of St. Thomas."

The Catholic Leader writes:—

We heartily welcome this contribution to the great St. Thomas question supplied by the Editor of the *Catholic Register*. St. Thomas is the Apostle of India and it is but fit that all those interested in the Church in this great land should study its foundation, its glorious beginning. And no one is fitter to guide than the author who has lived all his life under the shadow of the Mylapore Cathedral which contains

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the grave of the Apostle and who has made the life of St. Thomas his life-study. Of course one cannot expect finality in this great historical question, but his well illustrated booklet supplies a good *résumé* of the question and is an acquisition to Catholics in India who want a reliable, short and clear exposition of the question.

The Messenger of the Sacred Heart writes :—

Once again the question of the great Apostle's preaching in Southern India is examined by one who has taken pains to gather together all the most recent information. Before we form an opinion on the evidence it is well to remember the accepted principle of sound history, that a firmly established tradition is in itself one of the strongest arguments in favour of an historical fact. Consequently, in beginning the study of this point, the fairest attitude of mind is a presumption in favour of the fact not that impossible state of paralysis sometimes called "an open mind." It is always easy to deny; to prove needs both talent and material; but if the proof is not absolutely conclusive, it may often produce a probability which tradition makes conclusive. This we believe to be the case with the St. Thomas story; and we think that if Fr. Thurston, or Dr. Fortescue or others had lived in Southern India they would very much modify their views. We congratulate Mr. D'Cruz on his good piece of work.

The Ave Maria of America writes :—

The time-honoured tradition which places the martyrdom of St. Thomas the Apostle, in Southern India is ably defended in a recently published work by F. A. D'Cruz, K.S.G., formerly Superintendent of General Records, Madras. His conclusions are based on the latest researches in connection

with the St. Thomas tradition. The bibliography, which includes the late Bishop Medlycott's learned book, "India and the Apostle Thomas," is proof of how painstakingly Mr. D'Cruz has done his work.

The Birmingham Weekly Post writes:—

"St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India," by F. A. D'Cruz, K.S.G., is most absorbing, as it comprises "an investigation based on the researches in connection with the time-honoured tradition regarding the martyrdom of St. Thomas in Southern India." None could be better equipped to fulfil this attractive task than Mr. F. A. D'Cruz, the Retired Superintendent of the General Records at Madras.

The Madras Mail writes:—

This is the latest addition to a considerable volume of literature which has grown round the association of St. Thomas with India. The author has been at great pains to sift all the evidence for the time-honoured tradition regarding the martyrdom of St. Thomas in India. The highest dignitaries of the Church in India have expressed their appreciation of his work, which has also been favourably reviewed by the Catholic Press. Mr. D'Cruz is a Retired Superintendent of General Records, Government Secretariat, Madras, and his experience in this branch of the service has familiarised him with the art of diving into archives. The industry and intelligence which he has displayed in consulting all the available authorities bearing upon the St. Thomas tradition is praiseworthy. He refutes the ultra-sceptical position taken up by the Rev. George Milne Rae, a former Professor of the Madras Christian College. Mr. D'Cruz says: "The aim of the present essay is to show that there is no justification for confining St. Thomas's labours

to the North and ignoring the weight of evidence in favour of the Apostle's connexion with the South."

The book contains some excellent illustrations of historical value, such as the coins of King Gondophares, the stained glass panels of the Cathedral at Tours, in France which represent scenes from the legend connecting St. Thomas with King Gondophares, as well as of various landmarks in St. Thomas and its neighbourhood. The authorities consulted include the Roman Breviary and ancient Syriac documents. The thanks of Roman Catholics are due to Mr. D'Cruz for the very convincing manner in which he endeavours to establish the fact that St. Thomas suffered martyrdom in the neighbourhood of Madras, and that his grave is in the present Mylapore Cathedral.

The Angelus writes:—

Indian Catholics should feel greatly indebted to the learned author of this splendid monograph on the stay and martyrdom of St. Thomas, the Apostle, in India, which is introduced to the reader by an erudite preface, penned by Mgr. A. M. Teixeira, Vicar-General and Administrator of the Diocese of Mylapore Mr. D'Cruz has perused and mastered practically all the sources ancient and modern on this important question; and the circumstances of his residing *in loco* has inspired him with an eager desire to make the point clear. His devotion to the diocese which is proud to bear the name of St. Thomas, besides his scholarly bent, and his character, his lights, and method of work, have eminently fitted him to inform the reading public on the history of the controversy, and the latest findings and conclusions in connection with the St. Thomas Indian tradition which he victoriously vindicates. This book is a model of controversy, in harmony with the laws of historical criticism. . . .

The Examiner writes :—

We were just going to answer some questions of a correspondent when this book came into our hands. It is a subject on which all our available sources of evidence seem to have been exhausted; and as these sources are well surveyed by the author we can recommend the book as giving as satisfactory a result as is attainable.

The Annals of the Propagation of the Faith writes.—

Catholics and non-Catholics alike should welcome this most arresting book, with its unpretentious cover, and wealth of beautiful illustrations, for it is at once admirable as an apologetic, and valuable for all who are interested in the archæology of ancient India. Much has been said and written on the subject of St. Thomas' traces in South India, and Mr. F. A. D'Cruz has here resumed the whole question with an acumen, accuracy and lucidity that recommend his book wherever good scholarship is appreciated.

The patience and perseverance that the author has devoted to his task are evident on every page, and if we could desire that in some sections the subject could have been treated in greater detail, Mr. D'Cruz has at any rate produced a reference-book that will be the authority for many a succeeding writer. With the increase of interest in our Indian Missions visible on all hands, it is safe to predict renewed researches into the tradition that links with such excellent reason St. Thomas' apostolate with Southern India, and although such volumes may be primarily for our fellow-Catholics in Malabar, considering how fondly they cherish the memory of St. Thomas, such a book is bound to evoke keen interest among all who are concerned to elucidate an especially important point of Missionary history.

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The author is to be congratulated on his illustrations; nothing could better enhance his record than these pictures. We may point out that for A.P.F. readers of *St. Thomas in India* should possess a special attraction, seeing that one of the first Indian branches to be affiliated to the British Branch is now flourishing at St. Patrick's Church, St. Thomas' Mount, Madras, the spot of all others linked with the memory of the Apostle, where Fr. Motha Vaz is developing our Association with much energy. We note that in a sympathetic "Foreword," Mgr. A. M. Teixeira, V.G., and Administrator of the Diocese of Mylapore, fitly emphasises the gratitude of Indian Catholics to the author, for his book—and British readers will cordially echo it.



Hoe & Co., Madras.



